

# **Motivation of Volunteer Translators in the Online Game Popmundo**

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Tässä tutkielmassa käsitellän selainpeli Popmundossa tapahtuvaa vapaaehtoiskääntämistä. Tavoitteenani on tarkastella vapaaehtoiskääntäjien motiiveja toimia tehtävissään erityisesti kolmesta näkökulmasta: mikä sai heidät aloittamaan pelin vapaaehtoiskääntäjinä, millaisia hyötyjä he kokevat toiminnasta saavansa ja minkä tähden he ovat valmiita toimimaan tehtävissään ilman rahallista korvausta.

Taustoitän tutkielmaa sijoittamalla Popmundossa tapahtuvan käännöstoiminnan pelilokalisaaion viitekehukseen, minkä lisäksi esittelen pelin vapaaehtoiskääntäjien toimintaympäristön sekä yleisellä tasolla että pelin erityispiirteiden osalta. Tutkielman varsinainen teoriapohja koostuu vapaaehtoistoimijoiden ja erityisesti vapaaehtoiskääntäjien motiivien tutkimuksesta.

Tutkimusaineisto koostuu pelin vapaaehtoiskääntäjiltä verkkokyselyn avulla kerätystä datasta. Kyselyyn vastasi yhteensä 22 pelissä kyselyn toteuttamishetkellä toimineista 51 vapaaehtoiskääntäjästä. Valtaosa aineistosta koostuu kääntäjien vastauksista avoimiin kysymyksiin, joita analysoin laadullisesti teemoittelua käyttäen. Teemoittelussa rajasin ensin käsittelyn ulkopuolelle motivaatioon liittymättömät osat aineistosta, minkä jälkeen etenin teemojen muodostamisessa ja ryhmittelyssä aineistolähtöisesti.

Tutkielmassa tärkeimmiksi Popmundon vapaaehtoiskääntäjiä motivoiviksi tekijöiksi nousevat halu auttaa yhtäältä peliä ja toisaalta omaan kieliyhteisöön kuuluvia kanssapelaajia, itse työn tuottama nautinto sekä mahdollisuus kehittää pelin ulkopuolella tarvittavia taitoja. Pelin vapaaehtoiskääntäjille tarjoamat pelinsisäiset, rahanarvoiset edut eivät vaikuta kääntäjien motivaatioon merkittävästi. Vapaaehtoiskääntäjien motivaatio vaikuttaa muuttuvan jossain määrin sinä aikana, kun he toimivat vapaaehtoisina: motivaatio aloittaa vapaaehtoiskääntäjänä sisältää enemmän altruistisia motivaatiotekijöitä suhteessa utilitaristisiin kuin motivaatio jatkaa tehtävässä ja toimia siinä ilman rahallista korvausta. Tulokset olivat verrattain odotettuja, eivätkä poikenneet merkittävästi aiemmasta vapaaehtoiskääntämistä koskevasta tutkimuksesta.

Avainsanat: vapaaehtoiskääntäminen, motiivit, pelilokalisaaio, Popmundo



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# 1 Introduction

My thesis focuses on the volunteer translators of the browser-based role-playing game Popmundo. Specifically, I intend to focus on their motivations: why they decided to start working as volunteer translators, what benefits they feel they receive from it and what their feelings about doing volunteer translation for no monetary reward are. To answer these questions, I have created a questionnaire and sent it to the volunteer translators themselves. I will additionally provide a brief glimpse into the self-perception and background of the volunteer translators.

Volunteer translation is a wide phenomenon with great variance in its occurrences – with the development of the internet having brought forth a multitude of new forms to do and organise volunteer translation. While research on the subject has accordingly increased in the 2000s (Talvikallio 2014, 14–15), web-based volunteer translation still remains only a marginal research interest within Translation Studies (hereafter frequently referred to as TS) – perhaps even disproportionately so considering the scopes of professional and volunteer translation (Pérez-González & Susam-Saraeva 2012, 149–150).

I have been – and still am – a volunteer translator in Popmundo myself for over nine years, a time period which encompasses the beginning of my ongoing personal journey towards professional translation. My own changing professional status has made me reflect on the ethical dilemmas of reconciling volunteer and professional translation as well as on the reasons and motivations for being a volunteer translator in general. I believe questions of the latter variety in particular are familiar to other volunteer translators, as well, regardless of whether they already are or have aspirations to become professional translators themselves. For this reason, I am focusing on the volunteer translators' motivations specifically.

My being a volunteer translator in the same organisation I am studying means that I have a double role in relation to Popmundo: that of a volunteer translator and that of a researcher. This includes certain potential risks for my thesis: I might be inclined to treat the company favourably due to having enjoyed their game over the years. Kaisa Koskinen (2008, 9) refers to split loyalties with, in my case, the game and the people I know in it clashing with academic objectivity. On the other hand, being a volunteer translator in Popmundo myself, I have a unique perspective on the translation process and tools in the game – O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 32) state outright that this kind of position is clearly advantageous, naming the reluctance of

the game industry to disclose information to external parties as a hindrance to research in the area. Being conscious of the risks involved helps alleviate them, while it is also important to be clear about one's roles so that the reader has the opportunity to judge any potential biases for themselves.

I believe hearing the volunteer translators' own voice is important to ensure that the issue is examined as holistically as possible. Furthermore, the volunteer translators discussing their own motivations for volunteering should offer something new to the discussion on the ethics of volunteer translation, which seems to have focused more on the impact volunteer translation has had on professional translation on the one hand and on the role of companies and organisations using crowdsourcing on the other. I believe that we can learn more by giving a voice to the people producing the translations than by only studying the process or product – while focus on the translator has been observed as a recent and desirable trend in TS (see e.g. Pym 2009 and Chesterman 2009). Furthermore, when studying people and their motivations, not including the voice of these people themselves needs to be well justified. This is one of the main reasons for basing my thesis on a questionnaire distributed to the volunteer translators of Popmundo – which will be further justified in section 6.

The questionnaire, made with the University of Tampere's e-form tool, was distributed to Popmundo's translators by posting a link to the questionnaire on a closed forum within Popmundo, with only the volunteer translators and the developers of the game having access to the forum. The questionnaire comprised six pages, each featuring one to six individual questions that covered background information on both the translator's character in the game and the translator themselves, information on their translation experience both within and outside the game, their perception of the relationship between volunteer translation and ethics and, most crucially for my thesis, their self-understanding of their motivations to act as volunteer translators. I received 22 answers out of a total of 51 translators working on the game at the time.

I analysed the answers to the questionnaire qualitatively, through thematic analysis. My analysis followed a modified version of the six-step model introduced by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2006): familiarising myself with the data, categorising the data, naming, renaming and reviewing the themes I identified and finally writing my analysis of the answers. Having produced the analysis, I then discuss my findings in relation to previous research on the topic.



Studying volunteer translation in an online game, I will need to examine game localisation in general to some extent in my thesis. In TS, game localisation is an emerging field; like other fields for which the development of the Internet has been and continues to be crucial, game localisation develops at a faster pace than research and, indeed, professional practices can keep up with. As a result, professional translators only have a ‘vague awareness and insufficient understanding’ of issues related to Web 2.0 – a crucial prerequisite of online volunteer translation, which requires the read-write interface of Web 2.0 instead of the earlier read-only interface – as observed by Joanna Gough (2011, 195) in her survey-based study. One way of tackling this is by making such issues a focal point in one’s research.

The majority of existing studies concerning volunteer translation in general and the motivation of volunteer translators specifically have focused on volunteer translators in the context of larger actors, such as Facebook (Dombek 2014), Wikipedia (McDonough Dolmaya 2012) and TED (Olohan 2014). While this is perhaps an understandable starting point for studying volunteer translation, it has left smaller companies and organisations into the shade. At the same time, it is reasonable to assume these smaller actors and their volunteers have, in some respects, a different perspective on volunteer translation. Within the research conducted on game localisation, Minako O’Hagan & Carme Mangiron (2013, 39) state that the emphasis has similarly been on commercially successful console and PC games, while casual online games – which are ‘rapidly becoming a significant part of the game industry’ – have not attracted much attention.

Besides the individual pieces of literature referred to in it, my thesis as a whole owes much to the commendable theses of Sanni Irjala (2017) and Eeva Talvikallio (2014). I have, in many places, followed their example in decisions concerning the structure of the thesis as well as utilised many sources provided by them. For this reason, I am grateful to the duo. My gratitude is also due to the respondents of the survey – I was pleasantly surprised by the percentage of respondents out of the volunteer translators of Popmundo. The open answers provided were further very thoughtful and detailed, and I cannot thank my volunteer colleagues enough for providing them. Finally, I wish to thank the developers of the game for their cooperation and interest in my thesis.

I will begin my thesis with a brief overview of game localisation from both practical and theoretical perspectives in section 2. In section 3, I will discuss volunteer translation from various perspectives, first providing definitions contrasting volunteer translation with

professional translation and discussing the various forms that volunteer translation takes, in online environments in particular, in section 3.1. After this initial discussion on volunteer translation, I am turning my attention to volunteer translators' motivation in section 3.2, introducing certain theoretical models on studying motivation as well as relevant studies on the motivation of volunteer translation, before closing off section 3 with a brief discussion of certain related ethical considerations in section 3.3.

Game localisation and volunteer translation provide the general context of translation activities in Popmundo, whereas in section 4, I will focus on the game Popmundo itself; examining it as a game, an organisation and a translation environment. In section 5, I will delve deeper by describing volunteer translation in Popmundo from the translators' perspective, discussing the translation process and resources as well as the operating culture of Popmundo's translation community. In section 6, I will introduce methodological issues and the questionnaire I used, discussing questionnaires in general, the questionnaire I sent to Popmundo's volunteer translators and my method of analysis. Section 7 then consists of the analysis of the answers to the questionnaire, whereas section 8 features my conclusions.

## 2 Game Localisation

The translation activities conducted in Popmundo fall under the concept of game localisation. While game localisation incorporates a wide variety of different types of translation activities, differing in the way the translation process is organised, for instance, it is still useful to discuss it in brief to provide some context for the volunteer translation activities in Popmundo. In this section, I will offer an overview of what is generally understood by game localisation, emphasising issues relevant to my thesis. The section is divided into two subsections: I will first discuss game localisation in research, also touching upon terminological issues, and then offer an overview of the practices prevalent in game localisation.

### 2.1 Game Localisation in Research

A widely accepted definition of *localisation* still seems to elude Translation Studies, as some consider localisation too broad a term to be used in TS (e.g. Bernal-Merino 2006), whereas some believe localisation to be a useful term due to its adherence to industry practice (e.g. O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013), for instance. While a similar dichotomy exists for the concepts of *game localisation* and *game translation*, a detailed discussion of these viewpoints is unnecessary for the purposes of the present thesis. I will use the term *game localisation* when referring to the activity of creating and maintaining a new language version of an existing game, with the focus on the practical action involved in the process. The process may take place concurrently with or after the creation of the original language version of the game and includes a conglomeration of technical, technological, linguistic and social acts and processes. Whereas I will use the term *game localisation* in the role mentioned above, I will still employ *translation* when discussing phenomena for which using such a specialised term is unnecessary. As a result, I will, for instance, refer to volunteer *translation* and *translators translating* the contents of Popmundo in the process that, from the perspective of Popmundo, the game, and its developers constitutes *game localisation*.

O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 105) emphasise how game localisation arose as a 'practice that emerged from a new technological platform', referring to the fact that software can 'exist in [...] potentially infinite versions', be 'scaled to various sizes' and 'be regularly updated'. They use this conceptualisation of game localisation as a means of situating it within TS, arguing that this aspect changes the relationship between the source text and the target text, undermining the primacy of the source text (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 105). Bernal-Merino (2006, 32), on

the other hand, goes as far as to state the usage of the term game localisation within TS would be inaccurate due to the fact that it ‘also refers to non-translational activities’.

O’Hagan & Mangiron (2013, 119) have also discussed game localisation as ‘blind localisation’ because translators are often ‘prevented from accessing contextual information’ which might, nonetheless, be crucial for understanding the piece of text in question. Translators thus need to utilise Anthony Pym’s concept of ‘translation risk management’ to ‘avoid a negative communicative outcome’ (O’Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 119). This aspect of blind localisation applies particularly well to the translation activities of Popmundo, and I will return to it in section 5.1.1.

O’Hagan & Mangiron (2013, 107–108) argue that game localisation incorporates the concept of *transcreation*, understood as the greater level of creativity required from game localisation compared to other localisation endeavours. Furthermore, they believe that the concept alleviates some of the tension between the terminological duel between translation and localisation because it stresses the importance of the creative aspect of game localisation. In effect, transcreation can be seen as adaptation of the source text to produce a target text, but because of the loaded nature of the term *adaptation*, O’Hagan & Mangiron turn to transcreation instead. (O’Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 107–108.) The terminological choice of using transcreation further emphasises the translator’s active role and agency (O’Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 191). Transcreation itself, however, is a debated term in TS, with Bernal-Merino (2006, 33), for instance, arguing that all translations can be called transcreations as ‘they require a certain degree of creativity on the translator’s part’. While I have decided not to utilise transcreation as a term in my thesis, I still believe my perspective similarly emphasises the translator’s role.

Game localisation has garnered growing interest within Translation Studies during this millennium. Naturally, conceptualising the phenomenon has been one of the foremost research interests, but scholars have also concentrated on issues such as culturalisation, communication between different actors involved in the process, text typology within game localisation, accessibility, fan translation and issues related to translator training. Whereas growing interest towards game localisation has reared its head in academic circles, it is worth noting that major publications concerning game localisation were still scarce and the number of doctoral dissertations on the subject from a TS perspective still amounted to zero in 2013. (O’Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 34–39.)

## 2.2 Game Localisation in Practice

In their 2013 book *Game Localization*, Minako O'Hagan & Carme Mangiron provide an in-depth description of the then-current practices concerning game localisation. In this section, I rely heavily on their book due to its clear and multifaceted discussion on the matter. Because O'Hagan & Mangiron focus on console games<sup>1</sup>, however, I will highlight certain differences when compared to the localisation activities in Popmundo where relevant.

Game localisation is characterised by a wide variety of text types and texts with different functions within those text types – both between different games and genres and within the same game. The content localised in game localisation can be referred to as assets, which can be divided into four types of assets that exist in video games: in-game text, art assets, audio and cinematic assets, and printed materials, with each category including texts with different functions. In-game text, referring to 'all the text present in the user interface', can be further divided into categories such as 'menus, help messages, tutorials and system messages'. (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 122.)

While creativity in general is considered a negative in software localisation – the translator must conform to previously made decisions in terms of matches from a translation memory, for instance – in game localisation it is considered a positive, and even a necessity (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 108). Furthermore, O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 150) argue that game localisation is a good example of translation driven by its *skopos* or purpose: to entertain the user of the game. Whereas with more cinematic video games the convergence between audiovisual translation and localisation in general is an important issue (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 106), the question is not relevant to my thesis as Popmundo does not employ any cinematic features in the game.

Globalisation in general is an important trend within game localisation, especially with regard to massively multiplayer online games (MMOGs), such as Popmundo, where players encounter other players who speak 'different languages while accessing the same game but from different

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<sup>1</sup> Console games are defined by O'Hagan & Mangiron (2013, 6) as 'games designed to be played in a dedicated computer system specifically designed for playing games'. The terms *electronic* or *digital games* generally refer to all games played on an electronic/digital platform, whereas *video game* usually has the same definition. However, *video game* can also refer to console games specifically in contrast to games played on a personal computer, which are often called *computer games*. (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013; Bernal-Merino 2006.) Due to this terminological mess, I am referring to Popmundo simply as a *game* or, when more precise definitions are needed, as an online game, browser-based game, role-playing game or some other term directly related to the issue at hand. I will return to these terms in more detail when discussing Popmundo as a game in section 4.2.

locations in the world' (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 113). In light of this feature of the environment of MMOGs and many other games, it is crucial that the localised versions of the game are compatible with each other. The game industry generally tackles these issues by using GILT processes (globalisation, internationalisation, localisation and translation). (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 111–113.)

One way of dealing with the repercussions of the globalising world in games is culturalisation or cultural localisation. Mangiron (2008, cited in O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 211) defines this as the 'adaptation of the cultural content of a game to be able to market it successfully internationally'. This is, of course, a part of all localisation and, indeed, translation, but it is particularly essential in the creative world of game localisation. Games are today accepted as cultural artefacts, which further stresses the importance of culturalisation within game localisation. (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 202, 211–212.)

Localisation may be organised through either an in-house or an outsourced localisation model. With the former, localisation happens under the supervision of the game's publisher or developer on their premises, while outsourcing refers to using an external localisation or translation agency to handle localisation. (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 116.) When the localisation is conducted by using volunteer translation, such as is the case with Popmundo, this distinction is not quite as clear: localisation occurs under the developers' supervision and the users cannot be considered wholly external, but the actual localisation process is, nonetheless, conducted externally.

### **3 Volunteer Translation**

Volunteer translation is a wide-ranging phenomenon with varying forms and practices. In this chapter, I will discuss volunteer translation from different perspectives to provide a background for the translation activities of Popmundo, which fall under volunteer translation. I will begin the discussion by examining the relationship between volunteer and professional translation and the multitude of contexts in which volunteer translation is practiced in section 3.1, first defining volunteer translation. In section 3.2, I will discuss the motivation of volunteer translators from a research perspective, including theoretical models of studying motivation and previous research on the motivation of volunteer translators. In section 3.3, I will then introduce Julie McDonough Dolmaya's (2011) three ethical aspects related to volunteer translation, which will provide a useful tool for discussing the results of the questionnaire later in the thesis.

#### **3.1 Volunteer Translation: Concepts and Contexts**

Volunteer translation can be seen as a form of both translation and volunteering. To define volunteer translation, then, we must first have a definition of volunteering (and translation, to be precise, but I am taking translation as a given here). A suitable definition for my thesis is provided in the article *Why Do You Translate? Motivation to Volunteer and TED Translation* by Maeve Olohan (2014, 18; citing Cnaan, Handy & Wadsworth 1996) in which she identifies 'four dimensions which generally inform judgements about volunteering: free will, reward, context for the activity and beneficiaries'. Based on these dimensions, Olohan (2014, 19) arrives at a working definition for volunteer translation: '[T]ranslation conducted by people exercising their free will to perform translation work which is not remunerated, which is formally organized and for the benefit of others.' Snyder & Omoto (2008, 3) make the important distinction on remuneration that it is not remuneration itself that defines volunteering but that the person does the activity 'without expectation of reward or other compensation'.

It is important to note, however, that defining volunteering is a complex matter and that judgement is still required – each of the dimensions can be conceived as scalable, with 'purist and broader definitions of volunteering' (Olohan 2014, 18). Therefore, the definition given above corresponds to a somewhat 'pure' understanding of volunteer translation, but slight deviations from it (or within one or more of the four dimensions) should not be considered prohibitive for an activity to be considered volunteer translation from a broader perspective.

Discussing volunteer translation, it is often useful to contrast the phenomenon with professional translation, and to consider the situation in the translation industry as a whole. The relationship between professional and volunteer translation as well as the entire translation industry itself are in a state of flux largely due to the development of information and communications technology, the Internet in particular. Machine translation and translation software help with the most simple and repetitive tasks, while translation work in general has become faster and easier, and communication with clients and among industry professionals has become easier and more efficient. However, competition and demands for efficiency have increased, salary level of and appreciation for translators has decreased, and large, multinational companies dominate the translation market. (Talvikallio 2014, 1, 22.)

These developments in the translation industry have fragmented translation professionalism, with Gouadec (2007, xvii–xviii) suggesting that referring to translation professions would be more prudent. In part, these developments allowed supply and demand for translation outside monetary economy to increase in the form of volunteer translation, for instance (Talvikallio 2014, 1). Easily accessible technology and enhanced communication allow volunteers to use ‘the wisdom of crowds’ (Surowiecki 2005) to overcome potential shortcomings of individuals (Talvikallio 2014, 23). New forms of volunteer translation have occasionally even been seen as a threat among translation professionals (Irjala 2017, 16; Flanagan 2016, 157–163).

On the other hand, O’Hagan (2011, 13, 15) points out both that professional translators participate in volunteer translation activities alongside untrained volunteers and that most professional translators use user-generated content freely available online in their professional activities on a daily basis. With the ‘powerful trends of Internet technologies advocating openness and sharing’, it is hard to imagine the translation field succeeding in attempts to utilise these trends in translation activities while also keeping actual translation outside them (O’Hagan 2011, 13–15). Furthermore, online volunteer translation can be seen as having had a positive impact on the status of minority languages and global access to information as well as being important in the event of humanitarian crises that require quick reactions (Irjala 2017, 17).

My focus on relatively recent technological developments is, of course, not to say that volunteer translation is a new phenomenon – indeed, Luis Pérez-González & Şebnem Susam-Saraeva



(2012, 151–152) state that non-professional translators<sup>2</sup> have always been important mediators, but the scope of their activities has been widening recently, with non-professional translators being involved in an impressively wide array of different translation activities in increasingly heterogeneous ways due to processes such as digitalisation, increased migration and ‘new forms of civic engagement in public life’. At the same time, focus in TS has overwhelmingly been on professional translation even though a significant share of translations is done by non-professional translators – and this has been the case for as long as the discipline has existed (Pérez-González & Susam-Saraeva 2012, 149–150).

If the relationship between volunteer translation and professional translation is not clear-cut, the situation within and near volunteer translation is not much clearer, either. For instance, Anthony Pym (2012), in his book review of Minako O’Hagan’s *Translation as a Social Activity. Community Translation 2.0*, lists a variety of terms used in the journal – from *collaborative translation* and *translation crowdsourcing* to *fansubbing*, for instance, in addition to the *community translation* proposed in the title. Pym (2012) himself prefers the simple *volunteer translation* to community translation due to his desire to emphasise the ethical issue of ‘who gets paid for what, and in what way’. However, he does observe that the two are, in reality, ‘two quite different phenomena’ (Pym 2012). Other terms proposed elsewhere that could be considered for my thesis include *user-generated translation* and the more specific *volunteer website localisation* (Perrino 2009). In another article, Pym (2011, 97) lists and defines various such terms, here recommending *volunteer translation* because ‘the term assumes that the fundamental difference at stake is the monetary payment received (or not received) by the translator’. (For a more complete overview of the terminological situation concerning volunteer translation activities in an online environment, see also Talvikallio 2014, 15–17 and Dombek 2014, 20–30.)

The terminological choice is, in part, a matter of perspective: which factors are considered decisive and whether the phenomenon is discussed from the perspective of the organisation or the translator, for instance. Crowdsourcing, for example, is clearly based on an organisational perspective: O’Hagan (2011, 14) describes the term as having ‘captured the imagination of the business world’, which, together with the overt reference to *outsourcing* in the term, makes

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<sup>2</sup> Non-professional translators and volunteer translators do not, of course, refer to the exact same group of people, as both professional and non-professional translators can act as volunteer translators, but it is reasonable to assume a significant enough overlap between the two groups that the remarks of Pérez-González & Susam-Saraeva are relevant here.

Pym (2011, 79) consider the term to have no specific reference – albeit he acknowledges it is ‘widespread in technology businesses’. As my desire is to focus on the translator’s perspective, I do not consider *crowdsourcing* a suitable term due to its business perspective – although Popmundo’s translation activities could certainly be considered an example of crowdsourcing when discussed from the perspective of the company developing the game.

The drawback of using terms such as volunteer or collaborative translation for activities occurring in an online environment is that the aspect of the activity occurring on the Internet is not emphasised. For the purposes of my thesis, this is, however, not particularly relevant, as discussing only the translation activities in Popmundo firmly situates all discussion as concerning an online environment, which does not then need to be emphasised in the term used for those translation activities. At the same time, the most relevant aspect for my perspective on the translation activities of Popmundo’s volunteer translators – the contents of which I will discuss in section 5 – is their voluntary nature. For this reason, I am using the term *volunteer translation*.

Another issue with the term volunteer translation as concerns my thesis already arose in its definition: Pym (2011, 97) considers the monetary payment received by the translator the defining characteristic when determining whether an activity can be considered volunteer translation. As I will later discuss in section 4.1 in more detail, the volunteer translators of Popmundo receive a gift pack as thanks for volunteering in the game – which can be considered remuneration, as the gift has monetary value. However, I take Pym’s wording of ‘monetary payment’ to refer to payment in money specifically. Furthermore, as I am submitting to Olohan’s definition of volunteer translation introduced in the beginning of this section, reward or remuneration is only one of the four dimensions of volunteer translation and, as pointed out by Snyder & Omoto (2008; cited in Olohan 2012, 194–195), it is the *expectation* of reward rather than the reward itself that is crucial. As the definition further includes the scalability of the dimensions and the gift pack given to translators in Popmundo can be considered to be somewhere in the middle of the remuneration scale rather than as a clear and obvious example of remuneration, I believe it is reasonable to conclude that the existence of the gift pack does not prevent me from defining the translation activities in Popmundo as volunteer translation.

Research on volunteer translation has only emerged as a substantial research interest in the 2000s – although interest in the related translation activism already rose during the cultural turn of the 1990s – with increasing focus being given to online volunteer translation specifically

along with the development of the field itself (Talvikallio 2014, 14–15). Perspectives on the subject have included the development of computer-aided translation platforms to help volunteer translators, the potential that related practices might have for the future of professional translators’ working environment, the ethics of volunteer translation (O’Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 299–300, 304–305), fan translators’ cultural and genre expertise as well as the innovations and norm-breaking practices in fan translation itself, and the operation of various volunteer translation communities as well as the tools used by them (Talvikallio 2014, 17; Talvikallio’s discussion on research on volunteer translation (2014, 13–20) in general is extremely thorough and recommended for more detailed information). The motivation of volunteer translators has also been studied to some extent, and I will now turn my attention to this in section 3.2.

### **3.2 Volunteer Translators’ Motivation**

In this section, I will discuss research on motivation and related issues both in general and as relates to volunteer translation in particular. Beginning with theoretical discussions on volunteer motivation, I will remind the reader of Olohan’s (2014, 18–19) definition of volunteering as the basis for the discussion that will follow: activity done out of the person’s free will without direct financial benefit in a formally organised environment and benefiting others instead of the person themselves or their immediate family.

In her article on volunteer translation and altruism, Olohan (2012, 195) discusses ‘altruism as a conceptual tool for understanding volunteer translation’, basing her approach on behavioural economics. Altruism as a term can be considered the antonym of egoism, referring to selfless activities done for the benefit of others. Furthermore, altruism is generally understood to concern public goods – characterised by ‘non-excludability and non-rivalry’ – in contrast to private goods – which are ‘rivalrous and excludable’. (Olohan 2012, 196–197.)

Based on ideas taken from economics, however, Olohan makes a distinction between this kind of altruism, referred to as *pure altruism*, and *impure altruism*. The latter refers to ‘altruism that incorporates egoism’, in other words, that features other motivational factors than pure, selfless altruism. These additional factors may include a sense of duty, a feeling of guilt, the expectation of reward or ‘a sense of satisfaction from giving *per se*’ – described as a warm glow. The presence of impure altruism and the warm glow as motivation for volunteers has been observed in several studies. (Olohan 2012, 196–197.)

Talvikallio (2014, 59–60), on the other hand, describes Deci & Ryan's (2002, 2008) self-determination theory, which divides motivation into *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* motivation. Intrinsic motivation emphasises people's intrinsic need for growth, development, independent and creative action and success as a launching and driving force for human activities, whereas extrinsic motivation includes rewards and punishments which can either reinforce or weaken intrinsic motivation.

Talvikallio (2014, 60) further describes the major trends in studying volunteer motivation – focus is often on specific groups of people or people on a specific line of business, whereas typical methods for researching volunteer motivation are surveys or questionnaires based on theoretical models. The present thesis reinforces this image. Research on volunteer motivation typically distinguishes between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on the one hand and between altruistic and utilitarian motivation on the other – although these distinctions have also been called into question and more diverse models put forward (Talvikallio 2014, 60). One such model presented by Talvikallio (2014, 60, citing Clary et al 1998) is the volunteer functions inventory, which posits six psychological functions that volunteer activities may serve: values, understanding, enhancement, social, career and protective functions.

Olohan (2014, 20) – who has studied the motivation of both volunteer translators of an 19th century scientific journal (Olohan 2012) and, based on their blog posts, volunteer translators of TED (Olohan 2014) herself – presents two major studies on volunteer translators' motivation (stating them to be the only ones made to her knowledge at the time): those of McDonough Dolmaya (2012) and of O'Brien & Schäler (2010). In her survey-based study on the motivation of Wikipedia's volunteer translators, McDonough Dolmaya (2012) uses the categorisation of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, basing the categorisation on Lakhani & Wolf (2005). The definition of intrinsic motivation used by McDonough Dolmaya (2012, 180) – 'done not for a reward but rather for enjoyment or due to a sense of obligation to the community' – is close to the definition of impure altruism presented above.

In McDonough Dolmaya's (2012, 182–183) study, intrinsic motivation by far outnumbers extrinsic motivation. Contrasting these results to two studies presented by McDonough Dolmaya on the motivation of volunteers in Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) projects – those of Lakhani & Wolf (2005) and Ghosh (2005) – provides interesting insight into the differences the type of organisation and type of volunteer activity in question may result in. In both FOSS studies, both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation featured heavily as the volunteer

translators' motivation (McDonough Dolmaya 2012, 180–181). McDonough Dolmaya (2012, 185) hypothesises that this is influenced by the FOSS initiatives being product-driven, whereas the Wikipedia initiative is cause-driven, and that in product-driven initiatives the volunteers often get access to the end-product of their activity, whereas in cause- and outsourcing-driven initiatives the users of the end-product are generally other people than the volunteers themselves. I will return to McDonough Dolmaya's typology of three crowdsourcing environments in more detail in section 3.3.

In the other study referred to by Olohan (2014), Sharon O'Brien & Reinhard Schäler (2010) study the motivation of volunteer translators in The Rosetta Stone, a 'not-for-profit volunteer translation facilitator' through a survey sent to several hundred volunteers. O'Brien and Schäler (2010, 4) asked volunteers to rate different motivational factors based on their relevance to the volunteers. The motivational factors themselves were based on Shirky's (2010) concepts of *personal motivation* and *social motivation*, which, in turn, are based on Deci's (1972) theory of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Deci (1972, cited in O'Brien & Schäler 2010, 3–4) identified two emotions belonging to intrinsic motivation – 'the desire to be autonomous and the desire to be competent' – which Shirky (2010) refers to as personal and social motivation, respectively. Responses to O'Brien & Schäler's (2010, 6) survey indicate that both personal and social motivation was present among the volunteers' motivation – both the two most highly motivating factors and the two most lowly motivating factors included factors belonging to both personal and social motivation.

Alain Désilets & Jaap van der Meer (2011) discuss volunteer translators' motivation from a different perspective – the organisation's – explicit already in their choice to refer to crowdsourcing. They believe volunteer motivation to be crucial to the success of crowdsourcing endeavours and that this fact is an important reason for such practices not being more widespread than at present. According to Désilets & van der Meer (2011, 32), the most successful crowdsourcing endeavours are the ones where 'members of the crowd are emotionally invested in the content being translated'. Interestingly, the examples mentioned in their article include both humanitarian projects and for-profit companies such as Facebook and Adobe, indicating that the type of organisation is not a deciding factor in emotional investment. Other motivations mentioned in the article include volunteers' pride in their native tongue, language learning and acquiring experience in translation – as well as money, as the article

concerns collaborative translation and crowdsourcing and thus has a wider scope than online volunteer translation. (Désilets & van der Meer 2011, 32–33.)

### **3.3 Motivation in Volunteer Translation: Ethical Aspects**

To conclude my discussion on volunteer translation, I will briefly discuss certain ethical aspects related to motivation in volunteer translation. Ethics of volunteer translation can, broadly speaking, be discussed from the perspectives of the organisation or the individual; simply put, what are the ethical considerations for an organisation to use volunteer translation on the one hand and what are they for an individual embarking on volunteering activities on the other. Most discussion seems to have focused on the former question, as evinced by high-profile cases such as Facebook and LinkedIn, which concentrated mostly on whether the companies acted ethically.

However, ethics in general are not particularly important for my thesis, and for this reason I do not attempt to provide a holistic image of ethical considerations of volunteer translation in the following discussion; instead, I will discuss the three ethical aspects introduced by Julie McDonough Dolmayer (2011) in her article ‘The Ethics of Crowdsourcing’ – operating on the assumption that the perceived ethicality of Popmundo affects its volunteer translators’ motivation – which will prove useful later when discussing the findings from my questionnaire. The three major aspects of crowdsourcing endeavours introduced by McDonough Dolmayer (2011) are remuneration, visibility and minor languages – all applicable to Popmundo’s volunteer translation activities.

Discussion on remuneration often necessitates a distinction between non-profit and for-profit initiatives, with McDonough Dolmayer (2011) further using the typology of Nataly Kelly, Rebecca Ray & Donald D. DePalma (2011), who differentiate three different environments for crowdsourcing by the driving motivation behind the activity: cause-driven, product-driven and outsourcing-based environments (Kelly, Ray & DePalma 2011, 89). The product-driven category is of most interest to us here, as Popmundo is an example of this type of initiative, as I will argue for in section 4.1. Remuneration (or lack thereof) in for-profit endeavours is often criticised, questioning whether it is ethical for for-profit companies to ‘seek volunteers to translate its website or products, and to offer non-monetary incentives for doing so’ (McDonough Dolmayer 2011, 99–100). As this is a relevant question in the case of Popmundo,

one of the questions in the questionnaire sent to Popmundo's volunteer translators directly addresses the issue of remuneration.

McDonough Dolmaya (2011, 103–104) presents translator visibility, the second of the three ethical aspects as a multifaceted issue: translators and translation receive visibility from crowdsourcing initiatives, but its effects on translation as a profession in particular are both positive and negative – although for the volunteer translators themselves, visibility is mostly positive. Visibility in crowdsourcing initiatives might well help 'translation become a more visible practice', but at the same time crowdsourcing initiatives of for-profit companies in particular may help 'depict translation as a task requiring little formal training [...], more suitable for a hobby than a profession' (McDonough Dolmaya 2011, 104).

The third ethical aspect introduced by McDonough Dolmaya (2011) is its effects on 'minor' languages. Translation into minor languages has better chances to occur in crowdsourced initiatives than in traditional software or game localisation, as translation costs do not have to be considered – although user demand is still usually required. In fact, in some cases, crowdsourcing may only 'allow an organization to demonstrate its willingness to make a language version available, while making the community responsible for actually completing the translation'. (McDonough Dolmaya 2011, 104–106.)

## **4 Popmundo: Game, Organisation and Translation Environment**

This thesis focuses on the volunteer translators of a specific game: Popmundo. Popmundo is a browser-based MMORPG, a massively multiplayer online role-playing game<sup>3</sup>, although the game could be considered a somewhat atypical representative of the genre. The game can be accessed online at <https://www.popmundo.com>. Popmundo is, furthermore, representative of many aspects of gaming that have thus far been understudied. While, as mentioned in the introduction, casual online games have increased their status within the gaming world in recent years, research has been more focused on PC and console games. Popmundo is also a prime example of a game produced by a small company in contrast with practically all console games, which are developed by or in cooperation with large companies due to the financial investments involved. Thus, I believe my choice of a game to study – despite being mostly driven by my own experiences as a translator in the game<sup>4</sup> – can provide TS with some additional information on volunteer translation in a type of game as of yet unstudied.

I will discuss Popmundo in more detail first from an organisational perspective in section 4.1 and then as a game in section 4.2. Section 4.3 will then comprise an overview of Popmundo's translation environment: in section 4.3.1, I will detail the kinds of texts and languages that are in Popmundo, whereas in section 4.3.2, I will briefly discuss the technical environment that Popmundo provides for translation activities. This entire section relies heavily on my personal experiences as a volunteer translator in Popmundo. Whereas this section is aimed to provide a more technical and organisational perspective on the operating environment of the game, section 5 will focus on the translation activities in Popmundo from a more practical viewpoint.

### **4.1 Popmundo as an Organisation**

Popmundo is developed by a company called Spelkultur i Sverige AB and had three full-time developers working on it at the time of my interview with one of its developers, Ilias Neffling, in 2015. The game has fairly tight but stable finances, and the developers' vision for the game is to 'keep developing the entire game with new features that attracts new as well as old players' (Neffling 2015).

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<sup>3</sup> These game types are briefly defined later in section 4.2.

<sup>4</sup> I discuss my double role in section 1, Introduction.



Besides its developers, Popmundo has a fairly large number of volunteers, who are responsible for different tasks within the game: forum moderators ensuring that the discussions in Popmundo's forums follow the game's rules of conduct; editors handling submissions to the in-game magazine; community representatives handling relations between the developers and players; sentinels dealing with infractions of the game's rules; and translators translating the game's content into multiple languages. Some of the aforementioned volunteer categories have been divided into two hierarchical levels; therefore, the game has both senior translators and translators, for instance.

The volunteers of certain volunteer groups, such as the translators, receive compensation for their work. This comes in the form of a compensation package which includes a VIP membership and credits, the two different in-game benefits that players can buy with real money. Receiving the compensation package requires the volunteer translators (and other volunteers entitled to compensation) to claim the package approximately once a month instead of it being handed out automatically.

Besides this so called 'volunteer gift pack', the translators are often first in line to participate in any beta testing, which allows them to be among the first to see and test new game features. The translators are also mentioned together with other volunteers of each language version with the name of their character in the game, amounting to translator visibility in McDonough Dolmaya's (2011) three ethical aspects in crowdsourcing initiatives. However, I believe this visibility to be of minor importance to most of the game's volunteer translators.

In my experience, the 'volunteer gift pack' of in-game benefits is widely appreciated by the volunteer translators. According to Neffling (2015), while there have been incidents where translators attempted to collect the remuneration whilst not producing 'proper' translations, these instances have been very rare. In rare cases of such deception the remuneration has clearly been considered the main motivation to get into the volunteer translator position (but not do the work), but generally I expect remuneration not to be the main motivation of Popmundo's volunteer translators.

In the typology of crowdsourcing environments by Kelly, Ray & DePalma (2011), introduced in section 3.5, Popmundo's translation activities fall under the product-driven category, defined as 'generally projects in which for-profit companies recruit and manage a crowd'. The volunteer translators must further 'often match a specific profile to be chosen', are sometimes

‘remunerated through free products, services, or promotional merchandise from the company’ and can be ‘credited on the piece of content they have helped to translate’. (Kelly, Ray & DePalma 2011, 89.) Popmundo clearly can be categorised into the product-driven category as it is a specific project run by a for-profit company, the volunteers are ultimately managed by the game’s developers, they must match certain criteria to be chosen, are remunerated via in-game products and are credited as the game’s translators for as long as they stay in that position.

McDonough Dolmaya (2011, 106) states that

the ethical implications of crowdsourced translation depend not just on whether the initiative supports an open-source project, a non-profit cause, or a for-profit service, but also on how the project is organized and described to the public.

While Popmundo is a for-profit company, it is a small one, and based on forum discussions, for instance, I believe its status as a for-profit company does not affect the game’s volunteer translators’ motivation much. If ‘the public’ in the previous quote is replaced with ‘Popmundo’s players’, I believe that the game and company behind it have been successful with this, which, in turn has affected its volunteer translators’ motivation positively.

The recruitment process for translators is not regulated in a particularly detailed manner, although efforts towards standardisation of the process have been made in recent years by involving the senior translators in the process, which was previously conducted primarily by the previous translators of the language in question. Generally, however, the other translators of the language version in question are still the ones mainly responsible for selecting a successor or translator colleague for themselves, with the developers providing their approval for the choice after a background check (reviewing the proposed person’s possible infractions of rules of conduct, for instance).

The recruitment process is to be open to provide everyone the chance to apply. In practice, this means opening a thread on the forum for the language community, including requirements and the application period. The applicants are to be judged based on their ‘translating skills, knowledge of [...] local language and English [...] [and] personality since as a translator you can get criticism’. (Popmundo 2018.) To judge their language skills, the applicants are usually asked to undergo translation tests, the contents of which are decided by the translators of the language in question.

## 4.2 Popmundo as a Game

On the login page of Popmundo's website, the game is defined as 'an online role-playing game and community where the players strive for fame in a virtual music industry' (Popmundo 2018). While the game is centred on 'virtual music industry' – what is called the 'core game' centres on bands consisting of player characters playing shows, releasing records, touring, competing and climbing in rankings – Popmundo incorporates many other thematic areas, too, including politics, crime, company management and relationships. The game is played in real time, with events occurring in the game whether the players are logged in or not. As a role-playing game, Popmundo is further a very social game: communication with other players is encouraged within the game and, in certain parts of the game, it is even necessary.

The players are free to choose their characters' path and their own goals, as the game is open-ended – there is no point at which the game is won. The principal mechanism of progressing in the game are the 'character updates', which occur randomly, twice per day on average. The players select their characters' work and spare time focus, which determine what happens to them in the update: they can, for instance, improve their skills (which then determine how successful the characters are in a multitude of actions they take in the game), compose music or talk to the media to increase their band's popularity.

The game is browser-based, that is, played online entirely through the Internet browser on one's computer or mobile device. As a role-playing game, Popmundo could be considered an MMORPG, a Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game, defined by O'Hagan and Mangiron (2013, 8) as 'role playing games that can be played online simultaneously by a large number of players'.

Browser-based role-playing games tend to be characterised by a large amount of text (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 154), and Popmundo is no exception with nearly 1.2 million characters, or around 600 A4 pages, of translatable content according to Neffling (2015). This reliance on texts has resulted in a great demand for translations, and the developers began preparing the game for translation in 2004, with the first translated language version opening up as a beta version in early 2005 (Neffling 2015).

While Popmundo can certainly be categorised as an MMORPG, the game could easily be considered to belong in certain other genres, as well. Indeed, Clara Fernández-Vara (2015, 68–69) states that game genres may be defined based on differing criteria, such as the game's formal

features, its context or its fictional world, and that these definitions may well contradict each other. For the purposes of the present thesis, however, an in-depth discussion of the genre Popmundo best represents is unnecessary.

One possible way of viewing Popmundo is to consider it an example of Web 2.0, one of the three stages into which the Internet's evolution is commonly divided. Renée Desjardins (2011) offers a brief overview of the different stages – Web 1.0, Web 2.0 and Web 3.0 – in her article *Facebook me!: Initial Insights in Favour of Using Social Networking as a Tool for Translator Training*. Web 1.0 is essentially a 'read-only web' that did, however, democratise access to information. Web 2.0, then, 'designates the Web's shift from a primarily read-only interface to a read-write interface', in other words, communication and interaction between the web's users increased. Key features characterising Web 2.0 include digital collaboration, sharing and online social networking. Web 3.0 is the latest incarnation of the web. Known also as the semantic web, it 'focuses on customizing and personalizing the user's "digital experience" through media and platform convergence'. (Desjardins 2011, 178–180.)

Rather than temporal stages, Web 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 can probably more accurately be characterised as incorporating certain elements that are then realised in specific concrete aspects of websites. Thus, wikis, for instance, are an oft-cited example of a second-generation feature, belonging to Web 2.0. This mode of thinking makes it more understandable that the Internet today features websites that incorporate each of the three stages. Popmundo, in my opinion, generally speaking represents Web 2.0 – which is why the discussion that follows will focus on this stage.

Saverio Perrino (2009, 58) lists online encyclopedias, social news sites, blogging platforms, online marketplaces, social networks and multimedia platforms as examples of services epitomising Web 2.0 in that they allow users to easily 'control their own data and share information', while Web 2.0 further incorporates the idea of 'generating ideas and putting them into practice in an environment that trusts collective intelligence'. O'Hagan (2011, 12), on the other hand, mentions how user-generated content is increasingly being produced for for-profit enterprises in Web 2.0, while social networking could be seen as one of the most distinctive features of second-generation Internet.

Popmundo incorporates many of the features introduced above: its social nature in general and the amount of user-generated content in the game in particular. Popmundo's players generate

much of the content in the game, including blog texts, user-generated graphics and song lyrics as well as the role-playing stories created in the game's forums, in-game messaging system, in-game magazine and so on. Popmundo features a lot of text, on which its gameplay rests, but the main function of the texts is to guide players towards certain choices and actions, and in this sense, its existence does not conform to Web 1.0's read-only nature. The game does feature some customisation options for players, but its platform convergence is only at its early stages as of 2018. In other words, the game has some features that seem to fall under Web 3.0, but the vast majority of the game's functionality point towards Web 2.0. Perrino's (2009, 58) idea of Web 2.0 as 'generating ideas and putting them into practice in an environment that trusts collective intelligence' seems to hold true in Popmundo, as the developers often leave it up to the players to interpret new features as they like and to use them in a creative manner. Similarly, the amount of content curated and created by volunteers in the game closely adheres to the definition of Web 2.0.

### **4.3 Popmundo as a Translation Environment**

While the entire game and the company behind it provide a context that most likely affects the volunteer translators' motivation to volunteer, the more immediate environment in which they operate is likely to have an even more significant impact on their perception of themselves as volunteer translators. In this section, I will expound on the environment in which Popmundo's volunteer translators operate. With this, I refer to the linguistic and technical environments within Popmundo. In section 4.3.1, I will first describe the linguistic environment of Popmundo: the languages and text types used therein. In section 4.3.2, then, I will focus on the technical solutions used to accommodate translation, especially the translation interface.

#### **4.3.1 Languages and Texts of Popmundo**

Popmundo features a total of 24 active languages, that is, languages that are playable and can be chosen by regular players of the game. Besides these active languages, the game has a few more languages that are in the process of being translated. As the amount of text in the game is large and constantly expanding, new languages are taken up for translation only when there is both a clear demand for it and willing volunteers to translate the game texts (Neffling 2015). In my experience, this policy has changed throughout the years, with the developers having been laxer in allowing new language versions before – this can provide a partial explanation for the amount of minor languages playable in the game, such as Estonian, Lithuanian, Finnish, Croatian and Norwegian. Certain other minor languages such as the Azeri language are among

those that once were playable but have since become inactive. In any case, the amount of languages in Popmundo, as many browser-based games, can easily be as large as this, as the localisation process is easier and cheaper when compared to video games due to the lack of audio and cinematic assets and art assets to be localised in Popmundo.

Out of the 24 active languages of Popmundo, a large number would be considered minor in relation to the discussion on minor languages in McDonough Dolmaya's (2011) article. While the translators are, in my experience, proud of their work in general, I am expecting those working with minor languages to quite possibly be more motivated by the needs of their language community due to the fact that if they were not translating the game, the language version would be under risk of being made inactive – as it would be harder to find a replacement for the translator of a minor language than of a language with a larger player base. It will be interesting to see if this relationship between the translators of minor languages and their communities emerges more as a source of increased motivation or increased pressure for the translators in their answers to the questionnaire.

In spring 2015, at the time I conducted my questionnaire, Popmundo had a total of 51 translators, including senior translators, working on its active languages. The preferred number of translators per active language at the time, and still as of 2018, is two, while more translators are allowed for new languages so that they could catch up with the massive amount of text to be translated faster. Neffling (2015) describes the requirements for becoming a translator as follows: 'the translator speaks the native language fluently and have [sic] really good skills in English'.

The translators have an inner hierarchy that consists of two levels: regular and senior translators. Senior translators – who there are two of as of 2018 – are chosen by the developers from among the pool of regular translators and have certain additional responsibilities compared to regular translators, such as being responsible for the recruitment process for new translators (Neffling 2015). Additionally, senior translators are able to edit the so-called master tongue, the language version used by the developers. In practice, master tongue refers to the imperfect English written by the game's Swedish developers. This is also presumably the main reason for the game having translators for UK and US English.

The game experience in Popmundo relies heavily on various kinds of texts – although the game features pictures and other graphics, they are generally not relevant to the gameplay as such. Of

the four types of assets in video games mentioned in section 2.2, Popmundo only features in-game text and some art assets, of which only in-game text is localised. The in-game text in Popmundo features texts with a wide variety of functions, including texts that are aimed at helping the player, such as help texts, and those that describe and expand the game world and are written from the character's perspective, such as the character's diary entries. In addition to the localised in-game text, the game is reliant on various texts produced by the players themselves, such as blog texts, forum posts, song lyrics and articles in the game's in-game magazine.

#### **4.3.2 Translation Interface**

The volunteer translators of Popmundo have access to a special interface within Popmundo's website, hereafter referred to as the translation interface. Other users cannot access the translation interface, and volunteer translators have to be logged in to the game to access it. Beyond that, the translation interface requires the translators to enter a secondary password while logged in to the game in order to access it.

The translation interface includes several sections divided into different pages. The *Start* page of the translation interface offers a breakdown of translation activity within the last month by the translators of the language in question. New text strings – units of text given to the translators to translate, often without context, ranging from one word to several paragraphs in length – appear into a section named *Pending lang text changes*, while community news, change log texts and polls also have their own sections. The three latter types of texts refer to complete texts and polls that concern recent changes in the game that the developers have deemed important enough to inform the players about. However, the text strings appearing into *Pending lang text changes* are by far the most common type of text to be given for translation.

Besides the ones mentioned above, the translation interface also has the following sections: *History*, including recent changes made to the translations by the translators of the language version in question; *Search*, providing the translators the opportunity to search for something from the text files in any language used in the game; *Edit lang texts*, showing files into which text strings are categorised according to the function of the text strings or the page on which they appear, thus giving the translators the opportunity to view all strings in a specific file; *Translation 101*, giving translators instructions on how to translate within the context of the game and; *Translation Rules & Etiquette*, offering more general guidelines as to how to conduct oneself in a position of authority; *Hiring and Leaving Staff*, providing information on the

procedures concerning leaving one's position and recruiting new translators; *Translation Status*, a page that is public to Popmundo's players and offers an overview on active languages in the game and how much of the game's content is translated in each version; and, finally *Change Secondary Password* for changing the password to the translation interface.

In addition to the translation interface, the translators have their own dedicated forum, with restricted access. This forum is used by the developers to communicate with the translators on issues such as upcoming texts and features, recruitment and resignation as well as any arising questions and suggestions the translators may have on the original texts. Each language has a dedicated thread within the forum where the translator pair may discuss translation and where the senior translators may comment on the language version's progress. Moreover, the translators discuss the original texts among themselves on the forum, making sure they have understood the original text correctly and offering suggestions for improvements as well as pointing out mistakes in the originals.



## **5 Volunteer Translation in Popmundo**

Whereas in section 4 I examined Popmundo as an organisation, game and translation environment, in this section I will focus on *how* its volunteer translators operate in the technical and organisational environment previously described. Like the previous section, this section, too, will be partially based on my personal experiences as a volunteer translator in Popmundo as well as the understanding I have gained of other volunteers' process during discussions on the translators' forum within the game during my years as a volunteer translator – particularly when the text describes volunteer translation in the game on a general level.

I will begin the section with a description of the translation process in Popmundo from a practical viewpoint in section 5.1, first describing the major characteristics of the translation process in Popmundo in section 5.1.2 and then providing an account of the translation resources in Popmundo and how they are used by the volunteer translators. In section 5.2, then, I will provide a brief overview of Popmundo's operating culture with regard to translation work.

### **5.1 Translation Process in Popmundo**

In this section, I will provide an overview of the translation process in Popmundo with regard to its more practical aspect. Within the translation environment detailed in section 4.3, Popmundo's volunteer translators conduct their translation process fairly independently. This section is focused on the characteristics of the translation activities that are not related to the translation environment itself.

Many of the characteristics of Popmundo's translation activities are shared with other volunteer-based game localisation ventures – O'Hagan & Mangiron (2013, 131–134) list space constraints, platform-specific terminology, and the use of variables and concatenations as common constraints in game localisation, while O'Hagan (2005, 3–4) further refers to lack of context as a challenge with localisation ventures. In addition to this, Neffling (2015) alludes to the developers' tendency to use popular references in their texts as a specific feature of Popmundo.

Platform-specific terminology is not relevant for Popmundo, as O'Hagan & Mangiron (2013, 132) refer mainly to console platforms. Space constraints, variables, lack of context and popular culture references, however, are major characteristics of translation activities in Popmundo. Based on my own experiences translating the game, I am adding gameplay-related terminology as the fifth major characteristic of translation work in Popmundo. In what follows, I will first

provide additional information on these five issues in section 5.1.1 before briefly discussing how the tools and resources mentioned in the earlier section are employed in the actual translation process in section 5.1.2.

### **5.1.1 Major Characteristics of Translation Work in Popmundo**

The technical environment in which translation occurs in Popmundo imposes certain space constraints on the translated texts. Space constraints have always been an issue in game localisation (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 55), and this is the case in Popmundo, too. The issue exists in places such as menu texts, where the space allotted for a specific string of text allows for either a suboptimal translation or the truncation of the text – defined by O'Hagan & Mangiron (2013, 11) as 'text strings that appear incomplete or cut off on the screen due to space restrictions'. The issue occurs more frequently in certain languages than in others.

As is the case with many other software and game localisation ventures (O'Hagan 2005, 3–4), Popmundo's translation activities suffer from lack of context given to its translators. This can be conceptualised as 'blind localisation', discussed in section 2.1. The text strings to be translated vary in length from one word up to a paragraph or even several, with a single phrase or sentence perhaps the most common length. Translators often have trouble with the shorter strings because of the lack of context. While the developers have tried to address the issue by adding an explanation to accompany new strings on occasion, this is still an exception to the rule as of 2018. This forces translators to rely heavily on their knowledge of the game to try and guess at the most probable context for a phrase. I believe this 'enlightened guesswork' – based on the translators' knowledge of the domain – is one of the benefits of using volunteer translators instead of professional ones in the context of game localisation; avid gamers of a specific game (genre) are more likely to successfully guess the context of a phrase in certain situations because of their inside knowledge of the game or genre in question (see also O'Hagan 2005, 4). Regardless of this, the lack of context remains a problematic issue.

Furthermore, the strings that are to be translated very frequently contain so called variables, also referred to as placeholders, which are references to certain recurring strings that the game engine fetches from a database for each instance where that particular string is used. To illustrate the issue more clearly, I will provide an example of the use of variables in Popmundo: the variables '[CharacterFirstName]', '[PriorityFocus]' and '[WorkFocus]' appear, among other places, in the sentence '[CharacterFirstName] likes to <b>[PriorityFocus]</b> during off

hours and is trying to <b>[WorkFocus]</b> in order to get ahead professionally.’ (Popmundo 2018).

The translators see the sentence in the above form in the translation interface. They then have to translate it in a way that retains the different variables. This particular sentence occurs on the main character page of each character in the game, and the ‘[CharacterFirstName]’ variable is displayed as the first name of the character in question, while the other variables are filled with different strings from the database according to choices the player has made in the game. For a regular user, this sentence might appear in the following form: ‘Patrik likes to **go shopping** during off hours and is trying to **compose music** in order to get ahead professionally’.

As can be seen in the above example, translation can be hard for translators of languages in which conjugating words is common: they are forced to either keep the word fetched from the database in the same form as it appears there (and consequently fit the surrounding sentence to allow for this) or to accept a grammatically incorrect sentence. For the users of such languages, this can result in incongruent use of language, errors and the use of multiple forms to accommodate for different situations (such as when the variable can include words in different genders, as discussed in O’Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 132–133, in relation to Romance languages).

While the first three defining characteristics of translation work in Popmundo have been technical issues, the last two – in my experience the most important ones – are gameplay-related terminology and frequent references to popular culture. The former is crucial for users of different language versions to remain on a level playing field – terms that refer to certain aspects of game mechanics need to be consistently the same for the users to be able to understand the references to game mechanics made in running text. As for popular culture references, the developers themselves consider this one of the most difficult aspects of translation within Popmundo:

We have a tendency to play around with words using references to music, history, movies and all sorts of things from the real world. Sometimes those texts makes [sic] perfect sense in English, but not when translated and this may of course be very tricky at times. (Neffling 2015.)

### 5.1.2 Translation Resources and Their Usage in Popmundo

The translators can freely choose what translation resources and tools they decide to use and, in general, how to conduct the actual translation work. Most of the translation resources offered

by the game are related to communication between the translators, while the translation interface also features some instructions and guidelines on translation.

One of the most important channels of communication for translators in Popmundo is the translators' forum, briefly mentioned in section 4.3.2. The forum allows translators to communicate both among themselves and with the developers, though the latter is often restricted to designated forum threads and is, at best, intermittent. The developers mostly communicate with translators on issues such as advance warnings on upcoming features that will need translating and providing answers to questions on the meaning of specific strings. Most of the communication between developers and translators, however, goes through senior translators who communicate with the developers outside the translators' forum itself – although the developers do still visit the forum fairly frequently, too.

Communication between the translators themselves on the forum falls into roughly three categories in terms of the groups communicating: communication between senior translators and regular translators, communication amongst the translator pairs of each language and general discussion. The first type often features announcements from the developers or regular translators reporting issues related to translation that should be fixed. Each game language, on the other hand, has its own forum thread, where the translators have the opportunity to discuss translation issues among themselves, most often in the language they translate the game into. Each pair of translators may decide among themselves how they divide the work within their language version between each other. Finally, most of the discussion on the forum is of the general type, with discussion ranging from issues completely unrelated to translation to practical tips related to translation and calls for help with deciphering the original texts.

While Popmundo does offer some instructions for its translators, it is still largely an individual translator's own choice what tools or sources they decide to use if any, for instance. Besides the opportunity to ask for clarification from the developers and help from fellow translators provided by the translators' forum, the developers have authorised senior translators to draft other instructions for translation directly into the translation interface. Most of these are available on the *Translation 101* page, mentioned briefly in section 4.3.2. This page offers instructions for translators mainly on a very general level. The instructions concern both general approach to translation work expected of volunteer translators and certain more specific things, such as how to handle tags and links within translations and how to report errors. The page also features links to the most relevant discussion threads on the translators' forum. The threads are

updated somewhat regularly and give a fairly accurate account of the general translation practices in the game.

Other sources for translation instructions in the game are given either in the translators' forum or in connection with the string to be translated – the developers have the option to add a comment for each line of text they add but this option is rarely used. Both types of instruction are more specific in nature: In the forum, the developers often provide the translators with information on how an upcoming feature in the game is planned to work as a whole, to provide context for the strings that appear in the actual translation interface without context. During recent years, the developers have increasingly used the opportunity to give these kinds of instructions for translators. The instructions given in connection with single strings, on the other hand, are often used to clarify matters if the line includes a reference to popular culture or to explicate the place within the game where a single string is used, for instance. This type of instruction is often of crucial importance for translators, but its usage by the developers is inconsistent at the best of times.

The developers generally do not impose specific deadlines for translators – the translators operate on an as-soon-as-possible basis instead. Occasionally, the developers give the translators an approximate timeline of when a new feature will be implemented to guide and prioritise translation work, but even then, the schedule is not exactly binding. Interventions only happen when a specific language version begins to severely lag behind – in my experience, this would have previously required close to a thousand untranslated lines, but the policy on this seems to have become tighter more recently. The two senior translators working in the game are responsible for ensuring that all language versions remain up-to-date.

## **5.2 Operating Culture of the Translation Community of Popmundo**

In this section, I will briefly examine how the translation community of Popmundo operates. With 'translation community', I primarily refer to the regular and senior translators of the game as well as the game's developers – the three groups with access to the translator's forum, which is the main forum for discussing translation in the game. I will mainly touch upon expectations towards the translators and feedback procedures on the translations. In addition to this, I will briefly discuss the feedback and expectations of the regular players of the game towards the volunteer translators as well as the players' image of the translators, with players actively

commenting the translation of the game conceived as operating on the fringes of the translation community of the game.

The main expectation the developers have towards the game's translators is to produce an understandable translation of the original texts. Keeping the 'actual information' intact while adding a 'local touch' if and when needed is viewed as the most important thing to keep in mind whilst translating. As for the translators' activity, the spoken intent is that the translators are expected to be 'as active as they themselves can and want' to be. The developers mean for the volunteer translators to translate because it is fun, not turning translation into a cumbersome task. (Neffling 2015.)

When asked what kind of quality is expected from the translators, the developers offer no clear answer, only stating most translators require good quality from themselves and mentioning the players as a form of quality control: 'If a translation would be bad, that would be noticed pretty quickly by the players'. On the translators' workload, the developers do not provide a specific amount of time, most likely because of how much the workload varies depending on the introduction of new features. On the other hand, this may also be a sign of the developers not being aware of how large a workload their volunteers, in fact, have – Neffling suggests the question is better asked directly from the translators themselves. (Neffling 2015.)

The senior translators are expected to watch over the different language versions and their translators to ensure no language version starts to lag behind (Neffling 2015). As such, their expectations reflect that of the developers – perhaps with a more practical outlook: their focus is on quantifiable output. No surveys or other means have been used to specifically investigate the users' expectations for the translators and the translation they use.

The developers offer very little in terms of feedback on the translations. They, or more likely the senior translators, might ask about a language version's progress if that version is substantially lagging behind other versions, but as for comments on the actual content of translations, the translators rely on feedback from their translator pair in the language they translate as well as the players using the language version in question, with both types of feedback described briefly below.

Translator pairs organise their distribution of work and other work practices independently – no guidelines for this exist. Thus, the quality and amount of feedback given to each other is likely to vary significantly from one language version to another, if feedback is given at all.

Judging by the amount of comments made in the translators' forum in each language thread, this kind of feedback seems fairly rare; comments seem to focus more on individual pieces of texts to be translated and difficulties with them. While the translators' forum would be the obvious choice for giving such feedback, it is obviously possible that some translator pairs use some other media (such as the in-game messaging system) to offer feedback to each other.

Most language versions have their own thread on the forum which is used to notify users of changes and answer any questions or receive other feedback the users might have about the translations. The amount of discussion in such forum threads varies from one language version to another, but the most common type of comment is probably<sup>5</sup> a suggested correction to a simple translation mistake. Considering the ways of providing feedback to the translators detailed above, the translation process as a whole lacks systematic feedback procedures and quality control, and the quality of translations is somewhat dependent on the translators' competence on the one hand and the activity of the language community itself on the other.

Although, as stated, the developers rarely if ever offer any feedback on the actual translations, they do have a set of instructions that the translators are expected to follow whilst translating. When asked about how the translators receive feedback in general, Neffling (2015) only mentions points of contact through which users of the game can contact them, neglecting to consider feedback given by the developers, which – as discussed above – is practically non-existent. The amount of feedback on translations received by the developers is negligible but here Neffling (2015) associates feedback with problems with the translation: 'It [receiving feedback] happens of course, but it has been a while since we had any problems with a translation'.

When asked how the developers perceive the motivation of volunteer translators, Neffling (2015) provides a twofold answer: firstly, he believes the translators are motivated by a 'genuine interest and that they think it's fun', and secondly, 'they want to contribute to the game by helping us, as well as the players (by providing the game in different languages)'.

According to a large-scale survey conducted in the game in 2013, the players of the game have a positive opinion of the game's volunteer translators. The survey was aimed at collecting 'information about who the typical Popmundo player is, how we're is doing [sic] at the moment

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<sup>5</sup> This assumption and the rest of the description on these forum threads is based on my experiences participating in maintaining such a thread on the Finnish forum (or, as it is called, 'Helsinki forum' – the forums are named after the cities available for touring in the game).

and what the players think we should focus on in the future’ and included questions on users’ satisfaction with the volunteers’ work (Popmundo 2013). A total of 6,500 users answered the survey. The survey included one question on volunteers of the game, formulated as a statement – ‘I think the game officials do a good job’ – with users having the following options to react to the statement: ‘Yes, always’, ‘Yes, most of the time’, ‘Sometimes’, ‘Rarely’ and ‘No, never’. The translators were the only volunteer group to receive the largest share of answers on the first option, ‘Yes, always’, with a 43% share on that option. A total of 37% considered the translators to do a good job most of the time, while 15% answered sometimes, 3% rarely and 3% never. At the same time, the vast majority of the players, 76%, had never been in contact with game officials. (Popmundo 2013.)



## **6 Methodology & Data**

The premise of my thesis is sociological in nature in that my main interest lies with the experience of the volunteer translators themselves. My methodological approach is likewise sociological, and my thesis can be situated within the sociology of translation: Gabriela Saldanha & Sharon O'Brien (2013, 150) see a link between the call for more attention on the people involved in translation and the 'new sociological approach to the study of translation'. The approach gained interest within TS during the turn of the millennium (Inghilleri 2009, 279).

In this section, I will first discuss the use of questionnaires as a data collection method in general in section 6.1, before introducing the questionnaire I sent to the volunteer translators of Popmundo in section 6.2. The final subsection, 6.3, will focus on my method of analysis.

### **6.1 Questionnaires in Data Collection**

Using questionnaires as a method of data collection refers to the practice of having people answer a set of questions and submitting their answers to the researcher. Question types vary, as do the methods of administering the questionnaire: questions may be open or closed, for instance, while participants may respond to the questionnaire with the researcher present or absent and on paper or online, for instance. Saldanha & O'Brien (2013, 150) position questionnaires alongside methods such as interviews and focus groups as participant-oriented research and consider them 'crucial for the development of a truly encompassing sociology of translation'.

Questionnaires are a popular method of data collection because they 'offer a means of collecting structured data on a large scale and [...] consume less time than individual interviews' (Saldanha & O'Brien 2013, 152). On the other hand, they need to be carefully designed and administered for the collected data to address the research question. Other aspects of questionnaires that need to be carefully considered include validity threats with respondents possibly altering their behaviour due to being studied, constraint shown in the answers, the ever-present risk of a low response rate and achieving a sample size that allows for drawing meaningful conclusions. (Saldanha & O'Brien 2013, 152–153.) Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger (2009, 126–127) refer to the respondents' altered behaviour from a slightly different perspective, stating that 'responding to questionnaires is motivated by the need to maintain dignity' in relation to adhering to 'commonly accepted attitudes'.

Other issues to consider in questionnaire design include having a clear link between the research question or questions and the questions included in the questionnaire, the number and phrasing of questions and the type of questions used. The decision between using closed or open questions, or both, for instance, needs to be carefully considered from the perspective of which option provides suitable data to answer the research questions – closed questions provide more structured and more easily quantifiable data, whereas open questions provide qualitative data but are more open to interpretation. (Saldanha & O'Brien 2013, 153–158.) The use of questionnaires further involves certain ethical considerations, including anonymity – particularly with a questionnaire distributed to a small community and with a relatively small sample size – informed consent and confidentiality (Saldanha & O'Brien 2013, 161–162).

Saldanha & O'Brien (2013, 166) refer to 'Internet-mediated collection methods', questionnaires distributed by email or hosted online, listing several advantages and disadvantages. Advantages relevant to my questionnaire are the possibility of monitoring the response rate, a lowered 'possibility of "researcher effect"' and allowing participants to choose a convenient time to respond to the questionnaire. On the other hand, disadvantages I need to address include low response rates (even among questionnaires), potential exclusion and poor representativeness and difficulties confirming the identity of the respondents. (Saldanha & O'Brien 2013, 166–167.) I will address these issues in the following section after having introduced the questionnaire I used.

There are several examples in TS of the use of web-based questionnaires in data collection. Zwischenberger (2009), for instance, used such a questionnaire in her study on the self-representation of conference interpreters. According to Zwischenberger (2009, 243), the advantages of web-based questionnaires when compared to 'traditional paper-and-pencil questionnaires' include reaching 'a large number of potential survey participants within short periods of time', cost-efficiency and easier storage and utilisation of responses. Many of the studies already introduced in section 3.2 also utilised online questionnaires in collecting their data – these include McDonough Dolmaya (2012), O'Brien & Schäler (2010), Irjala (2017) and Talvikallio (2014).

Olohan (2012, 209) considers the study of motivation – 'attributing motivations to behavior' in particular – methodologically challenging but sees questionnaires as 'a useful starting point'. Olohan (2012, 209) makes an excellent point stating that 'methodologies may require yet further refinement to take account of cross-cultural variation [...] within a group of multilingual

and multicultural volunteer translators' – which certainly describes the group of volunteer translators in Popmundo. However, in the present thesis, I am content with providing an overall view of motivation without such detail. In what follows, I will introduce the questionnaire I used for data collection in the following section before detailing my method of analysis in section 6.3, with an eye on the methodological success of the studies mentioned in this section, as well.

## **6.2 Questionnaire for Popmundo's Translators**

In this section, I will introduce the questionnaire I delivered to Popmundo's volunteer translators to collect the data for my thesis. In addition to describing the practicalities of the questionnaire, its technical implementation and its contents, I will briefly consider how the questionnaire addresses the issues brought forward in the previous section.

I first presented my thesis topic to Popmundo's volunteer translators on 31 January 2015 on the translators' forum. The reason for doing this was to firstly ensure that I would get enough participants and secondly to discuss anonymisation with the translators themselves. My initial idea was to use the names of the translators' in-game characters in the thesis, but after discussing the matter with the translators, I came to the conclusion that this could have acted as a deterrent to answering the questionnaire. At this point, all translators participating in the discussion had a positive outlook towards the thesis and filling in the questionnaire.

I additionally discussed the questionnaire in advance with one of the game's developers to make sure that they approved of me conducting the questionnaire and distributing it on the translators' forum. However, besides their approval and answers to an email interview, I did not cooperate with the game or its developers in creating or distributing the questionnaire itself and have not received any benefits from the game in the process of making this thesis.

After creating a first draft of the questionnaire, I discussed it with my thesis supervisor and made some corrections based on her remarks. After this, I had five friends complete the questionnaire as test users – three of them had a background in TS, whereas two did not. After thorough and invaluable feedback from the test users, I further refined certain issues related to usability and the formulation of the questions, for instance. After this phase, the questionnaire was in the form that can be seen in Appendix 1.

I conducted the questionnaire using the University of Tampere's e-form tool available at [elomake.uta.fi](http://elomake.uta.fi). The tool provides a simple but customisable browser-based form that can be distributed as a link. Creating the questionnaire, I divided the questions thematically into six short pages, each of which comprises between one and six questions. The themes of the six pages are as follows: background information on the translator's character; background information on the translator; the translator's translation experience outside Popmundo; the translator's translation experience within Popmundo; the translator's perception of volunteer translation and ethics, and; feedback on the questionnaire. The questionnaire features both open and closed questions to collect both qualitative and quantitative data, but most of the questions directly related to motivation were open and thus qualitative in nature. The questionnaire in its entirety is available as Appendix 1.

I posted the link to the questionnaire on the translators' forum on 16 June 2015, with only translators, developers and community representatives having access to the forum. I asked for the translators' character name in the questionnaire itself to ensure that all answers were by volunteer translators. The questionnaire was open until 7 July 2015, and a total of 22 volunteer translators completed it during this time.

Using an online questionnaire as the method of data collection in my thesis felt like the natural choice due to the fact that the game itself is an online game and no-one was thus left out by hosting the questionnaire online – the entire target group clearly had access to the Internet in order to complete the questionnaire. In addition to this, the fact that the target group was genuinely global in terms of their physical location favoured using an online questionnaire.

To motivate the volunteer translators to complete the questionnaire, I initiated contact with them in as early a phase as possible, altered the level of anonymisation based on their suggestion as mentioned above, and raffled two 1,000-credit packages among those who completed the questionnaire. The questionnaire was further preceded by a page briefly explaining the reasons for conducting it to motivate the respondents.

The above discussion already provides some information on my considerations regarding questionnaire design in relation to the issues raised in the previous section. To conclude the discussion on such considerations, I will now separately address the four issues I identified as ones I need to answer, based on the discussion by Saldanha & O'Brien (2013, 166–167) on 'Internet-mediated collection methods'. The low response rate I addressed directly through the

incentives mentioned in the previous paragraph – but in addition to this, I was already fairly confident of sufficient participation based on my initial discussions on my thesis topic with the volunteer translators of Popmundo.

The issue of potential exclusion was based on the fact that ‘only participants who have online access can respond’ (Saldanha & O’Brien 2013, 167), whereas my entire target group have Internet access. Poor representativeness due to self-selection, however, remains an issue, and I cannot be certain that the group of volunteer translators who completed the questionnaire do not differ from the entire pool of volunteer translators in Popmundo in some respect. However, due to the nature of my thesis as a case study providing an initial look into the volunteers’ motivation, this cannot be considered too large a disadvantage. As to confirming the identity of the respondents, I asked for their character names in the questionnaire for this purpose (while assuring that the names would not be used for any other purpose).

### **6.3 Method of Analysis**

The method of analysis I use in this thesis is thematic analysis. Instead of being driven by theory, thematic analysis is a data-driven method which can be described as a ‘process of identifying patterns or themes within qualitative data’ (Maguire & Delahunt 2017, 3352). It is described as a ‘foundational method for qualitative analysis’ among qualitative approaches that are ‘incredibly diverse, complex and nuanced’ (Braun & Clarke 2006, 4). The researcher’s interpretation of the data is emphasised in thematic analysis: rather than themes simply emerging from the data or the translator simply giving a voice to the respondents, the relevant themes are identified and selected by the researcher (Braun & Clarke 2006, 7). Whereas many other qualitative analysis methods that are interested in patterns in the data focus on generating a theory of the studied phenomenon as the output, this is not considered necessary in thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006, 6–9).

Braun & Clarke (2006) identify certain choices involved in thematic analysis that should be discussed in studies using the method but that are often left unexplained. The first such choice is what is considered a theme. In qualitative studies, the prevalence of a theme is not the single deciding factor in determining themes – but should not be discounted either. (Braun & Clarke 2006, 10–11.) When categorising the answers to the questionnaire into themes, I have attempted to capture important elements that tell us something substantial about the volunteer translators’ motivation.

Another choice in thematic analysis relates to whether the researcher wishes to provide a ‘rich description of the entire data set’ or ‘a detailed account of one particular aspect’ (Braun & Clarke 2006, 11). My approach lies somewhere in between: As I focus solely on motivation, anything unrelated is not discussed. However, as the questions in the questionnaire are mostly about motivation, most of the answers are also related. Some questions proved irrelevant for my interest in motivation, which resulted in me not analysing answers to them. As a result, I cannot claim to have described the *entire* data set, and I clearly have focused on one particular aspect, but with a negligible amount of data being completely unrelated to motivation, I am not far from having a holistic view of the data set, either.

As for inductive versus theoretical thematic analysis, my approach falls under the latter, as my analysis is ‘driven by the researcher’s theoretical or analytic interest in the area’ (Braun & Clarke 2006, 12), the area here being the motivation of volunteer translators. Thus, my thematic analysis is more explicitly analyst-driven than completely data-driven (the researcher’s inevitable preconceptions notwithstanding) – however, this is only on the scale within different approaches to thematic analysis, which is still a data-driven approach in itself.

Themes in the data may be identified ‘at a semantic or explicit level, or at a latent or interpretative level’ (Braun & Clarke 2006, 13). My analysis is done primarily on the semantic level, without examination of the underlying layer ‘shaping or informing the semantic content of the data’ (Braun & Clarke 2006, 13). Semantic-level identification of themes is obviously not free of interpretation, and following Braun & Clarke’s (2006, 13) description, my analysis will follow a progression ‘from description, where the data have [...] been organised to show patterns in semantic content [...] to interpretation, where there is an attempt to theorise the significance of the patterns [...], often in relation to previous literature’. Thematic analysis on the semantic level tends to be conducted within an essentialist or realist paradigm, reporting ‘the experiences, meanings and the reality of the participants [respondents]’ (Braun & Clarke 2006, 13–14), and my analysis is of this nature.

Maeve Olohan’s (2014, 21) criticism of the studies on motivation by McDonough Dolmaya (2012) and O’Brien & Schäler (2010) was a factor in my choice of method of analysis. The studies, which I described in more detail in section 3.2, both include a number of potential motivating factors from which the respondents can choose – sixteen and six, respectively. The studies base these lists of motives on different ‘conceptual insights from previous research’ (Olohan 2014, 21). While in McDonough Dolmaya’s study, the respondents could choose up

to four motivating factors, in O'Brien & Schäler's study they could rate the six different factors on a Likert scale.

The differences in the available options given to the respondents in the above studies, as well as in Irjala's thesis (2017), which uses pre-set alternatives, as well, highlight what Olohan (2014, 21) describes as 'difficulties of construing motivation a priori for a volunteer activity which has been little studied to date'. Although both McDonough Dolmaya and O'Brien & Schäler provided the respondents with the option to list additional motivating factors, only a few did so (Olohan 2014, 21). As a result of these difficulties, Olohan (2014, 27) believes that 'limiting their [volunteer translators'] questionnaire choices to a small set of predetermined items reveals their perceptions of those items but risks overlooking other likely motivating factors'.

As a solution, Olohan (2014, 21) propagates 'an alternative, qualitative approach, in which motives may be identified and categorized based on the discourse of volunteer translators'. In Olohan's (2014, 23) article, this is done by analysing 11 blog entries in which volunteer translators in TED provide an answer to the question 'Why do you translate?' using constructivist grounded theory. This is not my approach as such, but by analysing the answers provided by Popmundo's volunteer translators to the open questions in the questionnaire I sent them using thematic analysis, I am, in essence, 'identifying and categorising motives based on the discourse of volunteer translators'. As such, I consider Olohan's article a source of inspiration in my analysis and believe I am avoiding the main pitfalls put forward by Olohan in relation to the studies of McDonough Dolmaya and O'Brien & Schäler.

Besides thematic analysis, my thesis could be characterised as a case study. The label of case study is often taken for granted (Saldanha & O'Brien 2014, 206), but there are certain obvious similarities in the present thesis to make the case for it being a case study: an emphasis on contextualisation and a real-life setting as well as limited generalisability (Saldanha & O'Brien 2014, 207, 209). I am, indeed, studying a phenomenon in a real-life setting (volunteer translation activities in Popmundo), occurring in a specific context (Popmundo itself), and the results of the thesis cannot be generalised to volunteer translators in general or even to those involved in game localisation.

My analysis generally follows the six-step guide by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2006), in a slightly modified and lighter version. Braun and Clarke (2006) provide the following six steps as the process for thematic analysis:

1. Familiarising oneself with the data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

As pointed out by Braun and Clarke (2006, 15), the steps are not sequential but occur partially simultaneously – for instance, reporting the patterns in writing (step 6) should begin in phase one instead of being left to the end. In my analysis, I thus wrote and revised the analysis section of this thesis throughout the process of analysis. The other steps were similarly intertwined with each other and cannot be separated from each other.

The data analysed in this thesis with the above method consists of answers to the open questions in the questionnaire sent to the volunteer translators of Popmundo. Section 7 of the analysis itself features discussion on background questions, too, but this did not undergo the same process of analysis – for the obvious reason of there not being text produced by the respondents to analyse thematically. In addition to this, I provide a more in-depth analysis of the data consisting of answers to three questions identified as the main motivation-related questions after the data had been collected. The data from these three questions is analysed in sections 7.3.1, 7.3.2 and 7.3.3, and then compared in section 7.3.4. After this, I will further discuss the findings in relation to previous research in 7.4.

I began familiarising myself with the data as soon as the responses began to pour in in 2015. I had to reorient myself to the data in 2018 when I also began to generate the initial codes within a separate text file and categorise them into themes – in practice, doing this simultaneously. I first categorised the data into two sets: 1) aspects of the answers related to motivation and 2) aspects unrelated to motivation. I then focused my attention on the former set, naming, renaming and reviewing the motivation-related themes throughout the process, consulting the initial data on occasion. However, the themes remain tied to the specific questions in the



questionnaire instead of being combined into a single whole. This decision was made due to my desire to compare the themes that I identified in relation to each aspect of motivation.

As my interest lies with the motivation of Popmundo's volunteer translators, the themes I identified were not necessarily the issues the respondents most frequently referred to, but such patterns that I deemed relevant in relation to my research question. In other words, I considered relevance more important than prevalence.

In analysing the categorised themes (or 'producing the report'), I utilised the dichotomy of utilitarian/altruistic motivation. While binaries such as this have been criticised due to 'volunteers [...] often [being] motivated by a combination of factors, and can be seen as behaving simultaneously altruistically and egoistically' (Olohan 2012, 19, citing Cnaan & Goldberg-Glen 1991), I am not using the dichotomy to propose that an individual's motivation could be neatly categorised as being purely altruistic or utilitarian. Instead, my use of the dichotomy is purely meant to make the analysis easier to digest by providing a means of categorising one aspect of the motivation-related themes for ease of understanding. As such, I am not implying a distinction between altruistically and utilitarianly motivated volunteers, but rather altruistic and utilitarian motives present in the themes I arrived at and thus in the answers of Popmundo's volunteer translators as a group, among which individual translators' answers usually exhibit both altruistic and utilitarian motivation.

## 7 Analysis

In this section, I will present and discuss the answers to the questionnaire sent to Popmundo's volunteer translators. The questionnaire itself was divided into six thematic sections, as discussed in section 6.2. I will first provide some background information on the volunteer translators in section 7.1 and then introduce the theme of motivation with answers provided by the volunteer translators to certain individual motivation-related issues in section 7.2. In section 7.3, I will discuss motivation in earnest, focusing on three perspectives on motivation – the translators' initial motivation, perceived benefits and motivation to work for no monetary reward – in sections 7.3.1 through 7.3.3. In section 7.3.4, I will offer a brief comparison of these perspectives on the volunteer translators' motivation. Finally, section 7.4 will comprise discussion on the findings with a view on how they relate to the research and expectations brought forward earlier in the thesis. In my discussion on the results of the questionnaire throughout this section, I will utilise the qualitative method introduced in the preceding section.

### 7.1 Background Information

The respondents of the questionnaire comprised 22 (43.1%<sup>6</sup>) volunteer translators of Popmundo. The overwhelming majority of the respondents, 18 (81.8%), were female, whereas 4 (18.2%) were male. Most of the respondents were in their twenties (9; 40.9%) and thirties (7; 31.8%), while other age groups included in the questionnaire were also present: 2 (9.1%) under twenty-year-olds, 1 (4.5%) respondent in their forties and 3 (13.6%) over fifty-year-olds.

The languages that the respondents translate into were predominantly European languages, with a few exceptions. Most of the languages present in the questionnaire featured one respondent (out of the two translators normally working on each language), but five languages had two translators answer the questionnaire. All respondents stated that their native language was the same language they translate into (although one respondent stated two native languages, one of which was the language they translate into).

The vast majority of the respondents had not received any translator training: 19 (86.4%) of the respondents answered 'no' when asked 'Have you received translator training?' Two stated that they had received 'other training', while one respondent had received vocational training. Some

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<sup>6</sup> This percentage is based on a total number of 51 translators. This figure does not include translators of passive languages, who are not listed publicly on the website. Additionally, the number of translators fluctuates depending on retiring and new volunteer translators; 51 was, however, at least very close to the correct total at the time the survey was distributed.

of the translators who had not received any (formal) training, clarified their answers, mentioning training given to them within Popmundo ('I was just told by my co-translator some basic guidelines', R2), having always been good in English or having English as their 'greatest hobby', and having a degree in journalism.

The answers exhibited some uncertainty towards what constitutes translator training – most likely partly due to it not having been specified in the questionnaire itself. However, the uncertainty was likely to additionally stem from the low visibility of translators and the resultant low understanding of what translator training is among the general population. This was well exemplified by a volunteer with a degree in philology: 'I haven't been trained to be a translator, but I have a university degree [...] (so I am not sure which answer to pick, 'no' or 'yes, some uni-level studies'. You chose! [sic])' (R18).

Only one of the respondents who had had some translator training clarified what kind of training it was (excluding the fact that one of the three had received vocational training): some training from the Translation Services whilst working for the government in order to be able to help informally 'when a full time translator was not available' (R4).

The question 'Have you practiced translation outside Popmundo?' only produced one instance of a person having practiced translation professionally – this person had not received any translator training. A further 12 respondents (54.5%) had practiced translation on a volunteer basis outside Popmundo, as well, while 17 (77.3%) respondents had translated for their friends or family and 12 (54.5%) for themselves. Only one person stated that they had not practiced translation outside Popmundo at all. The question allowed for multiple choices, and many respondents had translated in several of the situations provided in the questionnaire: 14 respondents (63.6%) chose more than one option.

As for Translation Studies, a vast majority of the volunteer translators had at most a vague idea of what it concerns. Four possible answers to the question 'How would you describe your relationship with Translation Studies (the academic study of translation)' were provided: 'I am familiar with the latest trends and history of the field', 'I know something about the central issues in Translation Studies', 'I am vaguely familiar with what Translation Studies deals with' and 'I have no or next to no experience or knowledge of Translation Studies'.

None of the respondents chose the first option, while only one (4.5%) chose the second one. Well over half of the respondents, 14 (63.6%), stated that they had no or next to no experience

or knowledge of the field while just under one third, or 7 (31.8%) respondents, were vaguely familiar with it. It is worth mentioning that the one person who knew something about the central issues in TS was not among those who had received translator training, nor were they the one person who had practiced translation professionally. In any case, it seems clear that professional translators, those with translator training and/or knowledge of TS were in a clear minority among Popmundo's volunteer translators, or at least among those who answered the questionnaire.

Almost two thirds of the respondents (14 people; 63.6%) answered 'No' when asked whether they aspire to become a professional translator. 6 individuals (27.3%) were unsure or did not know, and only 2 (9.1%) answered 'Yes'. This fits in with the previous answers, as one might expect people interested in the possibility of becoming a translator to acquaint themselves with TS at least to some extent. At the same time, the answers provide some insight into the translators' motivation: for the clear majority, volunteering with Popmundo was not motivated by getting translation experience for any professional aspirations.

The distribution of time spent as a volunteer translator indicated that there were translators with varying lengths of time spent as a volunteer translator in Popmundo among the respondents. Four people (18.2%) had been a volunteer translator in Popmundo for less than 6 months, 3 people (13.6%) from 6 months to 1 year, 3 people (13.6%) for 1–2 years, 9 people (40.1%) for 2–4 years and 3 people (13.6%) for over 4 years. Furthermore, the answers show that a long commitment to volunteering with Popmundo is not extraordinary with slightly over half of the respondents having volunteered for over 2 years. Long commitment speaks of motivation that remains high even after a long period in the position.

When asked how much time they use on translation in Popmundo during an average week, all volunteer translators provided a number of hours between 1 and 5. 5 respondents (22.7%) stated that they spend an average of 1 hour per week on translation, 4 (18.2%) reported spending 2 hours, 5 (22.7%) reported 3 hours, 6 (27.3%) reported 4 hours and 2 (9.1%) reported 5 hours per week. The variance is likely to arise partly from the fact that – from my own experience – the workload between different weeks varies greatly, and it is not easy to estimate an average workload. At the same time, there are no individual answers that diverge greatly from the others – the distribution is somewhat even up to four hours of time spent per week.

The questionnaire also included an open question on the quality the volunteer translators feel they produce, but I will not discuss the answers to this question in the thesis due to a shift in its focus. The next section delves deeper into the answers to the questionnaire, with the motivation of the volunteer translators the main focus.

## **7.2 Individual Motivation-Related Issues**

The main focus of the questionnaire was the volunteer translators' motivation, which is thus the theme I focus on in this and the following sections. In contrast to the questions discussed in the preceding section, the questions under discussion in this and the following section were all open-ended questions inviting the translators to reflect on their motivation in their own words. The questions were designed to approach motivation-related issues from several different perspectives to make the respondents consider the issue in as multifaceted a manner as possible. While this decision did result in some repetition in the answers of individual respondents, it produced the intended outcome as a whole: the respondents reflected on the question of motivation in depth.

The questions in this section provide additional insight to the three questions I consider the main focus of the thesis, which are discussed in greater detail in the next section. In this section, I am presenting the answers to questions on certain individual issues related to motivation that I asked from Popmundo's volunteer translators: whether they had considered resigning from their position, and if so, why; what kind of organisations they would be willing to do volunteer translation for and whether there are any they definitely would not do it for; and whether they could imagine practicing translation simultaneously on a volunteer and professional basis.

The question on resigning was intended to reveal what issues would be enough to counter the initial motivation to become a volunteer translator. A slight majority of the respondents had considered resigning at some point (12 respondents, 54.5%), while 9 (40.9%) had not (and 1 stated that they probably had). Not all respondents answered with a clear yes or no, but due to the formulation of the question – 'Have you ever considered resigning as a translator? If so, what would have been / be the most important reason?' – I categorised those who provided a reason under those who had considered resignation. There were two such answers categorised as yes. Two respondents – also categorised as 'yes' answers – further stated that they had, in fact, previously resigned, but had returned to the position.

Some of those who had not considered resigning still provided reasons that they would assume would make them resign. Additionally, some respondents provided several reasons for considering resignation. The most commonly stated reason for considering resignation by far was lack of time with 10 mentions (45.4%). The translators emphasised different aspects within the generic ‘lack of time’, however: some clearly stated the reason being that they simply did not have time (‘I was really busy for some weeks with my real life job and having a lot of translations to do in the game’, R1), while others reflected on the impact their lack of time would have on others: ‘if I feel that I’m not useful anymore and I cannot help as much as I should or [if I am] affecting my translator workmate and leaving him/her all of the workload, that will definitely make me resign’ (R20).

The second most common reason for considering resignation was having to work alone (due to the other translator in a language pair not pulling their weight) or mistakes made by the other translator (‘Yes -- because of my cotranslator (he translates next to nothing and he keeps making errors).’, R13). Five respondents (22.7%) gave this as the reason for considering resignation. A further two respondents (9.1%) mentioned the duties becoming tiresome / not fun anymore (‘Becoming tired with my duties, and a lack of time to work on the translation.’, R9), one (4.5%) mentioned having to focus on real life (‘The reason was the biggest and most important one to myself: matters in real life that needed my unwavering attention.’, R14) and one (4.5%) referred to harsh criticism from players (‘Also I considered leaving time to time because sometimes [the people using my language version]<sup>7</sup> can be too harsh with their criticisms.’, R17).

Several respondents volunteered information on what made them stay in the position of volunteer translator despite having considered resignation. Out of four such answers, three refer to remaining due to either a new addition to the translation team to share the workload or to an inactive colleague becoming active again. All three had mentioned the other translator’s inactivity as their initial reason for considering resignation. The remaining respondent’s reason for staying in the position included both enjoyment of the task and lack of replacements: ‘Yes. Lack of time, but knowing that there’s no one active enough in the community that could take over has stopped me. And mostly because I enjoy it.’ (R7.)

In addition to this, the two volunteers who had resigned but came back to the position provided reasons for returning to the position – basically stating that the reason that had made them resign

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<sup>7</sup> I have redacted the languages mentioned in some citations I use so as to preserve the anonymity of the respondents. In these instances, I have added a formulation such as this in brackets.

had been solved, while their motivation to be a volunteer translator in the game still remained. One of them had resigned due to issues in their real life ('Something about my devotion tells that once the dust had finally settled and I had gained my energy back, I returned and immediately offered my help with translations again.', R14), while the other had cited their translator colleague's inactivity as the reason for resigning ('But at the end seniors formed a new team and I knew they needed me there so I came back.', R17).

With the question on which organisations the translators would and would not do volunteer translation for, I aimed to look at motivational factors that were not necessarily specific to Popmundo itself – what would make Popmundo's volunteer translators volunteer in general. The most interesting finding here is, in my opinion, the fact that most of the respondents do not indicate organisations that are similar to Popmundo among the organisations they would volunteer as translators, marking Popmundo as a special case for many.

Some respondents only indicated organisations for which they would act as volunteer translators, while others only mentioned those for which they would not. Several of the respondents further considered the question difficult ('I haven't thought about it, to be honest.' (R16); 'Hard to say.' (R10)), with two respondents not offering any answer to either category.

Among the organisations that Popmundo's volunteer translators would consider doing volunteer translation for, non-profit organisations were the most favoured, with eight respondents referring either to non-profit organisations, charities, non-governmental organisations or volunteer organisations. Another four respondents said they would volunteer for organisations they agree with, enjoy or consider important – placing more weight on their personal views on the organisation than the type of organisation. The rest of the answers only featured individual mentions: small games, organisations that cannot afford translations, schools, individuals, friends' organisations, small companies, translating short brochures, and something related to the person's own work or hobbies.

Among the answers the volunteer translators of Popmundo gave when asked which organisations they would not consider volunteering for, I identified two major themes: five respondents stated they would not do volunteer translation for organisations with whose goals or political views they do not agree with ('I would definitely not translate for organisations that go against my personal values.', R9), while four respondents would not consider volunteering

for large companies, often specifying large companies that can pay for translation ('I wouldn't volunteer for an organisation that has means to pay someone to do it professionally.', R1).

Two respondents would not consider volunteering for political organisations altogether, and another two would not do so when the content to be translated belongs to a specialist field ('anything that has a specific vocabulary and lexical field related to it, would be too much for me', R15). One mention each was received by organisations driven only by profit with no social conscience, non-profit organisations not close to the person's heart, and anything outside Popmundo at all.

The next motivation-related question in the questionnaire concerned whether the volunteer translators could imagine practicing translation simultaneously both professionally and on a volunteer basis, and why or why not. A slight majority (12 respondents; 54.5%) could not imagine doing so, while nine respondents (40.1%) could. One answer could not be categorised under yes or no.

Out of the twelve respondents who could not imagine practicing translation both professionally and as a volunteer, half (six respondents) stated that their reason for this was that they were not a 'real' or professional translator ('being a translator without any degree or training is okay as long as it's on a volunteer basis. Otherwise you need to leave that to professionals.', R18) or not skilled enough ('I'm not skilled enough to claim to be paid for it', R15). Another four respondents simply had other professional interests ('I love my other RL [real life] job and have no plans on leaving it.', R11), whereas two respondents simply did not have the time, energy or interest needed.

The respondents who stated that they could be both professional and volunteer translators at the same time had more varied reasoning, with no single reason emerging as clearly the major one. Out of the nine volunteer translators, the answers of three respondents demonstrated that such a situation would be possible in principle, but they did not comment on its likelihood ('I could, but it wouldn't probably last for a long time', R13). Two respondents stated that whether such a situation would be acceptable or not would depend on the type of organisations in question: 'Some organisations, like popo [Popmundo], cannot pay you for the translations, because they can't afford [it]. If a company/person can afford a translator i see no point in translating anything for them for free.' (R2.)



Another two respondents considered volunteer translation good practice for aspiring translators ('Yes, I think volunteering for a small project can be a good training for someone that does it professionally', R1). One respondent considered it possible as 'a side job' (R6) and one gave no particular reasons.

While the division between 'yes' and 'no' answers seems fairly equal, some of the 'yes' answers exhibit conditions or only state the scenario would be possible in principle – it would seem that the clear majority of the respondents have at least some reservations towards combining professional and volunteer translation.

### **7.3 Motivation of Popmundo's Volunteer Translators**

Whereas the preceding section featured individual questions related to motivation, in this section I am discussing what I consider the three main questions of the questionnaire. As such, the discussion on these questions is in greater detail than on previous questions. I cover each of the three questions – focusing on the respondents' initial motivation, the benefits they perceive in the volunteer work and their motivation to work for no monetary reward – in their own sections, sections 7.3.1 through 7.3.3. In section 7.3.4, I will compare the answers to the main questions before moving on to discuss my findings in general in section 7.4.

#### **7.3.1 Initial motivation**

The first main question related to motivation was 'Why did you decide to apply for a position as a volunteer translator in Popmundo?' This was intended to examine the volunteer translators' initial motivation, before they had detailed knowledge of the nature of the translation work – as motivation for doing something does not necessarily remain the same but can evolve, I wanted to see whether the volunteer translators' motivation had changed during the course of acting as a translator. At the same time, the formulation of the question was intended to bring out the aspects of motivation that the volunteer translators felt themselves were the most important in attracting them to apply for the position.

The formulation of the question had an implicit assumption that the answers proved wrong: not all respondents had, in fact, applied for the position. As a result, several respondents had to preface their answer with explaining how they had become a translator, often having been simply asked to join the translation team directly or having contacted the developers due to a language version whose translation had fallen behind or to start translation work on a completely new language version. Despite this error in the question, all respondents stated some

motivation for becoming a translator, which I take to imply that the mistaken assumption did not have all that large an impact on the answers.

I categorised the data in the answers into main themes based on the type of motivation and arrived at four main themes: 1) desire to contribute to the game or help out, 2) dissatisfaction with the previous translation, 3) perception of the work as fun or interesting or interest towards working with languages, and 4) lack of interest from others or language version under threat (sense of obligation towards the community). Many answers featured several distinct motivations, and for this reason, I have ended up with 31 mentions for the abovementioned types of motivation despite having only 22 respondents<sup>8</sup>.

The most frequently cited motivation for the respondents to become a volunteer translator was the desire to contribute to the game or help out, with eleven people alluding to this in their answers. Not all such answers were clear about who it was they wanted to help, but it was possible to divide the answers into two groups: the clear majority of the answers either stated or implied that the target of the respondents' help was the game itself, with a total of nine answers ('I love the game and really wanted to give them something in return for their amazing work.', R11), whereas two answers alluded to helping the players who use a certain language version of the game ('To be able to help players who do not speak English to play the game and enjoy it in their own native language', R21). Several respondents mentioned how they had played the game for a long time and wanted to give something back to the game: 'I've played this game for 9 years now. I wanted to make my contribution and I think that the work is very interesting.' (R8.)

Eight respondents cited the fun or interesting nature of the work or their interest towards or enjoyment of working with languages as their reason for applying for the position: 'I took on the job because I enjoy working with language, its nuances, finding the perfect words for something... And because I like things to be correct, no grammar mistakes etc.' (R6.)

The majority of the respondents who mentioned this as their motivation also mentioned another category, frequently combining it with an altruistic motivation: 'I'm not sure, I guess I just

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<sup>8</sup> Due to this discrepancy, I have elected not to provide percentages in the discussion that follows so as not to mislead the reader to interpret the percentage as referring to a share of the translators, when it, in fact, would refer to a share of the mentions.

wanted to help somehow and I saw an opportunity of doing what I like and helping at the same time.’ (R16.)

Five respondents mentioned their dissatisfaction with the quality of the translation in their language at the time they became volunteer translators. For some, this was more personal (‘I couldn’t stand a little mistakes [sic] of other translators like references or gameplays’, R22), whereas some answers hint at the motivation being more about wanting the language version to be better for the users of said version: ‘I’ve seen that our translators are a bit lazy, so I decided to take care of the translations myself when the opportunity came.’ (R2.)

Six respondents stated that their motivation came from the fact that no-one else seemed to be interested in the position or that their language version was under threat of becoming non-playable – when a language version’s translation starts to fall severely behind, it can be made non-playable, in other words, players could not select to play the game in that language anymore. I consider both of these motivations to arise from a sort of obligation towards or connection to a specific language community. One respondent sums up this feeling of obligation in their case: ‘[The language I translate] had been dropped because the translation had fallen behind. I was one of the players who complained very loudly for it to be reinstated so when a vacancy arose I thought I should offer to help.’ (R4.) Another respondent’s answer shows their connection to a specific sub-community within the game: ‘Because no one stand up [sic] for this job in my community.’ (R3.)

Besides these four main themes, individual respondents also mentioned having staff member status (1 mention), the desire to improve their language skills (2 mentions), the desire to have some influence over the translation (1 mention) and their own suitable skillset (4 mentions) as their motivation. The last type of motivation received a significant number of mentions, but it was in all cases mentioned as an additional explanation to what I considered the main motivation, which is why I did not consider it a main motivation category in the answers to this question. The way this type of motivation was used in the answers is exemplified in the following answer:

I was offered the position rather than applying. I found it interesting and as I just stepped down as editor of It's POP<sup>9</sup> I was happy to help out with the game I love in another way. I'm not a professional translator but I have a master in my mother tongue and I'm good enough in English. I was sure I could do a good job. (R11.)

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<sup>9</sup> *It's Pop* (now renamed as *The Insider*) is an in-game magazine in Popmundo for which the players may write articles. The magazine has players volunteering as its editors for each language version available in the magazine.

### 7.3.2 Perceived benefits

The second main motivation-related question in the questionnaire concerned benefits received from the game. The question was intentionally formulated so as not to clarify what kind of benefits were meant in order to arrive at the volunteer translators' own ideas without guiding them too much towards a specific type of benefit. This was partly successful: many mentioned the in-game benefits of VIP membership and credits – monetary rewards given to volunteers by the developers of the game as a token of their gratitude – but still went on to describe other kinds of benefits, too, without restricting themselves to the 'official' benefits only.

The question was formulated as follows: 'What kinds of benefits have you received / feel you might receive from being a volunteer translator? What is the most important benefit to you?' When considering the answers, one must keep in mind that any benefits the respondents feel they get are not necessarily in any relation to what actually motivates them to volunteer – the benefits received by the volunteers and their motivation are two different issues. However, by asking for the most important benefit to the translators themselves, I attempted to get closer to which benefits motivate them.

As stated above, many respondents mentioned the in-game benefits. However, although nine out of twenty-two individuals mentioned them, every single one of these respondents in some way played down the importance of the in-game benefits, either by mentioning other benefits they consider more important than VIP/credits ('I received game credits and some VIP days. The most important benefit for me it's [sic] to be able to create a better game experience for the people who speaks [sic] my language.', R19) or by affirming either that it is not important to the person or that they would volunteer in any case:

I receive a free VIP membership in the game as well as in-game credits which can be bought with money and which enable various luxury perks. I don't find the benefits particularly important, but I would have to choose the VIP membership [as the most important benefit to me]. (R9.)

One respondent explicitly stated how they perceive the relationship between the in-game benefits and their motivation, and their answer seems to me to correspond to the general tone of the answers that mention VIP or credits: 'In game wise we receive a free subscription to the VIP service but that is not really what motivates me.' (R1.) The respondents do not seem to consider the monetary benefits they receive as a particularly important source of motivation.

Categorising the answers based on which benefit the respondents considered the most important, I ended up with three main benefit categories: 1) improving skills or acquiring

experience that can be applied outside the game, 2) helping the translator's own language community, and 3) enjoyment of the work itself. In addition to these three main categories, 3 respondents mentioned the VIP membership as the most important benefit (while playing down its importance) and 1 person did not provide an answer.

Many answers did not state the most important benefit outright – instead, it had to be interpreted from the answer, and the reader must be cautioned that my interpretation may not be in line with what the respondent meant in all cases. The main categories are obviously not mutually exclusive either – many respondents mentioned benefits that relate to two or all of the categories mentioned above. For instance, several respondents derived enjoyment from helping the game or their language community, in which cases I have made a personal interpretation of the answer on a case-to-case basis as to whether the enjoyment or helping others is to be considered the *most important* benefit. Below, I am first discussing the most important benefits mentioned by the respondents and then all benefits mentioned. I believe the former will provide insight into which benefits truly motivate the volunteers, whereas the latter will provide a better overall picture in which my interpretation of the most important benefit in each case does not take such a prominent role in the analysis.

Seven respondents mentioned improving their skills or acquiring experience as the most important benefit for them. The skills or experience the translators considered the most beneficial were mostly related to language skills: either actual language skills ('I improve my language skills and learn more about other cultures.', R3) or translation, specifically ('I think it gives me a good experience and practise with translation which is something I have to use sometimes in my real life.', R1). One person even mentioned a benefit one might not readily associate with a volunteer translator position in an online game: 'I have received alot [sic] of experience in pr cause of translation topic on [my language version's] forum where people can be really harsh' (R22).

This answer refers to the practice of each language keeping a thread on the language community's forum where the users of the language in question can comment on the translation and offer suggestions and/or corrections, for instance.

Four respondents mentioned helping their language community as the most important benefit for them. In this category, I included both explicit references to helping the players of a certain language version and references to seeing the translator's own language in the game. Two of

the respondents referred specifically to seeing their own language version in the game as the most important benefit to them – this could be interpreted either as personal satisfaction at getting to use one’s own language (‘I feel that having the option to choose to play PPM [Popmundo] using it is a nice “reward” itself’, R13) or as satisfaction at seeing other people use the language, having helped them in this way: ‘Most important to me is seeing [my language version] back in the game – offering an alternative for people who might prefer it to [another language version].’ (R4.) I find it likely that both aspects are present in both answers but categorised these answers under ‘helping others’ due to the explicit reference to helping others in the latter answer and the implicit reference to helping a small language community in the former.

The other two answers with helping the translator’s language community as the main benefit were more explicit in the respondent referring to helping the people of a certain language community as the greatest benefit for them. These answers were in many cases very similar to the ones to the question on initial motivation: ‘I enjoy making the game playable for people that otherwise might not be able to in their language’ (R7).

Finally, seven respondents mentioned enjoyment of the work itself as the most important benefit for them. This was the most diverse category, consisting of various positive feelings the respondents received from the translation work. The following answer, for instance, could just as well be categorised into the ‘helping others’ category, but the respondent emphasised their own feeling so much that I considered the feeling itself to be the most important benefit in this instance: ‘There is [sic] no benefits. It just makes me feel well, feel useful. Feel that I can share my knowledge with other people. Feeling useful is the most important benefit.’ (R2.) There was a total of three answers within this main category where the respondent specifically derived enjoyment from helping the game or other players, which shows how helping others often goes hand in hand with the personal satisfaction derived from this as a motivating factor – the two often cannot be separated from each other.

In other answers of this category, the feeling of enjoyment was derived from influence the volunteer position gave them in the game (‘The most important benefit is that I have influence on [my language] version of the game’, R18) and from the actual work, ranging from flashes of inspiration, such as the following answer –

Probably when there’s something so tricky to translate, and you just let it in the basket for days, sometimes weeks, until you suddenly come up with this BRILLIANT idea that makes it sound like you’re the original author of it all. Which we sometimes are, aren’t we? (R15.)

– to research for references (‘Acknowledging new things when trying to understand the context of the translations, such as the Fish Slapping dance<sup>10</sup>.’, R21) and straightforward fun (‘It’s fun, simple as that.’, R6).

When all benefits mentioned by the respondents in their answers to this question are considered, the main themes I categorised the data into are as follows: 1) improving skills or acquiring experience that can be applied outside the game, 2) helping others, 3) enjoyment of the work itself, and 4) the in-game benefits. The differences in these categories to those in the most important benefit are the addition of the in-game benefits and the change in category 2 to also include helping the game, which was not present as the most important benefit. The in-game benefits – already noted at the start of this section – is the most significant difference: they are mentioned in nine answers, but only three of these consider it the most important benefit, and everyone who mentions in-game benefits states that they are not important to them or that it would not influence their decision to volunteer.

Skills or experience applicable outside the game was mentioned as a benefit of volunteering in ten answers, out of which seven considered it the most important benefit. Nine respondents in total mentioned enjoyment of the work itself as a benefit of volunteering in their answers, while seven saw it as the most important one. Out of the seven who considered helping others as a benefit of volunteering, four considered it the most important one – and these all alluded specifically to helping their own language community. One answer was left blank.

### **7.3.3 Motivation to Work for no Monetary Reward**

In addition to the questions on the volunteer translators’ initial motivation and perceived benefits discussed above, I explicitly asked them about why they were willing to work for no monetary reward. While this is close to a definition of volunteering, the question emphasises the nature of volunteer work as work that provides no monetary reward. The exact formulation of the question was as follows: ‘As a volunteer translator, you are expected to use a lot of your free time for translation with no monetary reward (excluding credits and VIP). What are the most important reasons you are willing to do this?’ The question can easily be seen as leading the respondents towards a certain direction; for this reason, it was among the last questions asked from the volunteer translators. At the same time, I wanted to make them truly reflect on

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<sup>10</sup> The fish slapping dance is a reference to a Monty Python sketch. It is available in Popmundo as an interaction between characters: one can choose to have their character engage in a ‘Fish Slapping dance’ with another character when certain conditions are met.

their motivation to work for no monetary reward by having a somewhat leading question. In addition to the emphasis on no monetary reward, I hoped the question could be compared with the volunteer translators' initial motivation, providing information on their motivation to continue in the position.

In the end, the question succeeded partially in the aforementioned intention, but it had its flaws: several respondents considered the question to be, in effect, the same question as one or more of the previous ones – which is, of course, somewhat true; it is mostly the perspective that is different. Consequently, many answers featured some repetition. Seven respondents in total prefaced their answer with 'as I said', 'answered that one before' or similar. Obviously, an even larger share of the respondents might have thought the same. At the same time, however, even the answers thusly prefaced were not exactly the same as before and did feature some additional insights.

I identified three main themes among the answers to this question. They were 1) enjoyment of the work, 2) helping users of the game, and 3) desire to contribute to the game. However, the answers had two other themes that several answers referred to: other personal satisfaction (than enjoyment of the work specifically) and learning or using skills or getting experience. My reasoning for not considering these as 'main themes' is that both were significantly more diverse in the type of answers included in the theme than the three main themes, which were fairly uniform, as well as the fact that for both of the two additional themes, the respondents always (in the case of learning or using skills or getting experience) or nearly always (in the case of other personal satisfaction) mentioned other motivational factors in their answers, too – my interpretation is that the two latter motivational factors were, in many cases, additional motivation that reinforced the volunteer translators' already existing motivation.

A total of nine respondents mentioned enjoyment of the work itself as their reason for volunteering. While most of these answers referred to simple fun or interest towards the work ('There's one simple reason I volunteer as translator: I love doing it.', R16), two respondents mentioned they either like having influence over their language version or feel pride at being the one who makes the decisions on the final translation ('pride to see that you're the one deciding whether that word is going to be used instead of that other one', R15).

The additional theme of other personal satisfaction was, in some answers, fairly close to enjoyment of the work; two respondents referred to being a part of community or the staff. One



respondent mentioned appreciation from users of the game as motivating them. On the other hand, some mentions categorised under personal satisfaction were close to the main theme of helping others: one respondent referred to the good feeling they got from helping others, whereas another enjoyed having the option to play in their native language. In total, five answers referred to what is here categorised as other personal satisfaction.

Five respondents referred to being able to help other users as their reason for volunteering. Some of these answers would also refer to a specific language community: ‘Mostly for helping [speakers of my language] who do not speak Eng[l]ish to play a game they love without any language related problems.’ (R20.) While the number of mentions for this theme seems somewhat low, in at least four and possibly in all five of the answers where it was mentioned, I interpreted helping others as being the main motivating factor for those respondents.

The desire to contribute to the game was a reason for volunteering for seven of the respondents. Often this was linked to the enjoyment the volunteer translators themselves had experienced while playing the game and a desire to give something back (‘The game has given me a lot of pleasure over the years and I like to be able to contribute something to it.’, R4). The same respondent even elevates the game to something more than a mere game: ‘I have found it to be more than a game – it is a vehicle for people from all over the world to make contact with each other in a friendly and fun environment.’ (R4.)

Six respondents stated that their reason for volunteering in the game was learning new things, using their skills or getting experience. Each of the six respondents who mentioned this as one of their reasons for volunteering also mentioned additional reasons. Some referred to language skills in particular (‘I have no other place to use my language skills’, R17), whereas others were vaguer and referred to ‘learn[ing] things’ (R3) or ‘self-education’ (R14), for instance. One respondent referred to the possibility of writing practice provided by writing articles for the in-game magazine – as finishing their language version and getting it active in the game would also mean the possibility of the in-game magazine starting to accept contributions in the newly added language.

In addition to the above, individual mentions were given by one respondent to volunteer translation being ‘a nice getaway from RL [real life]’ (R11), while another stated that their reason for volunteering was ‘OCD mainly. Can't stand mistakes while using translated version’ (R22).

### 7.3.4 Comparison of the Motivational Factors

The above three questions all covered aspects of motivation from slightly different perspectives. In this section, I will compare the answers that Popmundo's volunteer translators gave to the three main questions and discuss the similarities and differences in the answers. Table 1 below provides a starting point for this discussion.

Table 1. Comparison of Popmundo's volunteer translators' motivational factors in their answers to three questions

Type of motivation	Motivational factors	Initial motivation (Question 1)	Perceived benefits (Question 2) <sup>11</sup>	Motivation to work for no monetary reward (Question 3)
<b>Altruistic motivation</b>	Contributing to the game	9	2/0	7
	Helping users/community	8	6/4	5
<b>Altruistic motivation, total</b>		17	8/4	12
<b>Utilitarian motivation</b>	Enjoying the work	8	8/6	8
	Improving skills / getting experience	2	9/7	6
	In-game benefits	-	9/3	-
	Dissatisfaction with the previous translation	5	-	-
	Influence/status	2	1/1	3
	Other utilitarian motivation	-	-	5
<b>Utilitarian motivation, total</b>		17	27/17	22
<b>Total</b>		34	35/21	34

When creating the above table, I needed to standardise the themes discussed in the previous sections in relation to the three main questions. For this reason, the motivational factors listed in the table are somewhat different in some places to the main themes discussed in the previous sections. This is due to the fact that categorising the data into themes was heavily based on the contents of the respondents' answers themselves and, as such, dependent on what the data genuinely contained – in a word, the categorisation was data-driven. Consequently, different questions provided slightly different main themes. For the table above, I needed to combine or

<sup>11</sup> The two figures in this column show total mentions and mentions as the most important benefit, respectively.

divide certain categories for the table to allow meaningful comparison. When comparing the above table and the discussion in the previous three subsections, this should be kept in mind.

The standardisation particularly affected the first two categories in the table: in the questions discussed in sections 7.3.1 and 7.3.2, there was largely no distinction made between contributing to the game and helping other users – due to the fact that the respondents did not really make such a distinction at large. In the case of perceived benefits, all altruistic motivational factors were in a single category, whereas with initial motivation there was an additional category: a sense of obligation towards the community in the face of a specific language version being under threat. This was mentioned in several answers, and I consequently categorised it as a separate category in the data. In the table above, this category is included in the ‘Helping users/community’ category, with the users of a specific language conceptualised as a language community the respondents wished to help.

The standardisation is visible in certain other categories, as well. One of the smaller categories – those not considered as ‘main themes’ in any of the questions – is included in the table: having influence or a particular status was mentioned in answers to all three questions and thus added to the table. I additionally collected some individual mentions into the ‘Other utilitarian motivation’ category. I have made one significant omission from the table, too: the ‘suitable skillset’ theme mentioned in four answers to question 1 is not included in the table because I considered the references the respondents made to it as being additional explanations for applying for the position rather than motivation as such.

As mentioned previously, the three main questions in particular concern motivation and various aspects of it. The similarity in the contents of the questions was noted by the respondents, but the questions still yielded answers that differed somewhat in relation to each other. By comparing the themes in the answers to each of the three questions, my intention is firstly to examine whether the volunteer translators’ initial motivation differed from their motivation after some time in the position, and secondly to look at whether the benefits they feel they get from their work correspond to what motivates them. Looking at the shares of themes in each question could highlight significant differences between the three perspectives on motivation.

The answers to each question have already been discussed in the three previous subsections, so I will focus solely on comparison of the answers here. I have further categorised the different motivational factors into two main categories of altruistic and utilitarian motivation – I will

begin by comparing differences in the individual categories and finish with comparison of the two main categories.

Contributing to the game was mentioned by a significant number of the respondents in response to questions 1 and 3, whereas it only received a few mentions in question 2. Helping other users or the community, on the other hand, was referred to in a healthy share of the answers to all questions, with a slightly larger share in question 1 than in the others. Based on the numbers over all three questions, both of these altruistic motivations were clearly important factors for Popmundo's volunteer translators – the low number of mentions for contributing to the game in question 2 is possibly explained by the respondents not having perceived it as a benefit as such.

Enjoyment of the work had a fairly similar, large share in all questions, indicating that it is a constant motivation for the volunteer translators of Popmundo. Influence or status was similarly present in all questions as a motivational factor but received only one to three mentions per question – it can be seen as a constant source of motivation that is, nonetheless, not particularly significant by itself. All the other motivations categorised under utilitarian motivation, however, differed drastically from question to question. Improving one's skills or getting experience only received a couple of mentions in question 1, whereas it was the category with the most mentions in question 2 and received five mentions in question 3. This seems to indicate that while improving skills or getting experience was important to the respondents – both as something they saw as a benefit of the volunteer work and as a reason for continuing in the position – it was not a key factor in their decision to volunteer in the first place.

In-game benefits (VIP and credits) were only mentioned in question 2, a clear indication that they were not a major motivation but only an added bonus. This is highlighted by the fact that while nine respondents identified in-game benefits as a benefit of the work, only three saw them as the most important one. Dissatisfaction with the previous translation was another category that was only present in answers to a single question, question 1: it was present as a motivational factor in five respondents' decision to volunteer. However, after starting as a volunteer translator, this motivational factor disappears – rather logically, as the volunteers were then able to change the translations they were dissatisfied with.

In Table 1, I have grouped the categories into two main groups: altruistic and utilitarian motivation. These refer to motivational factors that benefit others (altruistic) and oneself

(utilitarian). The distinction is not as clear as I have here made it appear: altruistic motivation, for instance, includes both pure and impure altruism, a distinction I discussed in more detail in section 3.2, with several respondents referring to the sense of personal satisfaction Maeve Olohan (2012, 196–197) describes as a warm glow.

In question 1, there is exactly the same number of mentions for altruistic and utilitarian motivation. In question 3, utilitarian motivation comprises a clear majority (64.7%), and in question 2, utilitarian motivation has an even larger share of the mentions (77.1% of all mentions and 81.0% of the motivation considered the most important). It would seem that the initial motivation to volunteer features an equal amount of altruistic and utilitarian motivation, but continuing in the position after being in it for some time relies more on utilitarian motivation. As for an explanation for the figures in question 2, altruistic motivation is perhaps not perceived to fall under the category of ‘benefit’ in a similar fashion as utilitarian motivation does.

However, interpretation based on the number of mentions only should not be taken as conclusive evidence, as the number of times a certain theme is mentioned in the answers tells nothing of the relative importance the respondents give on said themes in relation to others. As such, the above interpretation should only be considered indicative. I will discuss my interpretations of the results in more detail and based on both the number of mentions and more qualitative analysis in the next subsection.

#### **7.4 Discussion on the Findings**

Thus far, I have described the answers to the survey and the themes I categorised the data into, compared the results of the three main questions and analysed the results to some extent. In this section, I am continuing the analysis by highlighting links between the results of my survey and that which has come before in the thesis – theory and previous research as well as the statements and expectations of myself, Popmundo’s developers and other actors. My aim here is to provide my findings with a context both within previous research on volunteer motivation and, to a lesser extent, within the framework of game localisation and Popmundo itself.

Characteristics of game localisation include a wide variety of text types and functions as well as a positive outlook on creativity in translation. These features set game localisation apart from certain other fields of translation, in which creativity is not as encouraged and texts may be somewhat monotonous in content – medical and technical translation and general software

localisation, for instance. The share of enjoyment provided by the work itself among Popmundo's volunteer translators was fairly high, which may have been influenced by the creative and varied nature of the work. Creativity, however, is subjective – Lakhani & Wolf (2005, 10–12) noted 'enjoyment-related intrinsic motivation' as the top reason for volunteers in FOSS projects to contribute to the projects as well as reported the volunteers to experience their contributions – writing software code – as an overwhelmingly creative endeavour. As such, the above explanation would require further study.

Another major trend in game localisation is globalisation, particularly in MMOGs such as Popmundo, which has a genuinely global community of players. In such a global game, localisation is especially important for the game to be accessible for everyone playing it. The appreciation shown to translators by the players – as shown by the fact that translators were the volunteer group players were the most satisfied with in the game's user survey – may arise partly from this, and appreciation or status was a motivating factor present in some answers. A similar effect may result from the game embracing Web 2.0 – increased interaction between users and an environment that trusts collective intelligence helps the volunteer translators feel more appreciated.

The effects of globalisation and the consequent importance of localisation may, however, have a greater effect on the altruistic motivation of helping the community, which frequently manifested itself in the answers as a sense of obligation towards the volunteer's own language community. The social nature of the game itself may further strengthen the presence of this motivation among the volunteer translators' answers – communities are formed more easily in games such as Popmundo where communication and cooperation among players is encouraged than in other types of games, and the answers of the volunteer translators frequently reflected a sense of obligation to a specific community.

The definition of volunteer translation I subscribed to in my thesis included reward or remuneration as one of the four dimensions informing judgement on volunteering. While this dimension may be considered somewhat murky in Popmundo's case due to the volunteer gift pack given to the volunteer translators, the questionnaire results support my decision to consider Popmundo's volunteer activities as volunteer translation: the gift pack was not considered a major motivation by the volunteer translators themselves. The volunteer translators identified the gift pack as a benefit, albeit not many even considered it the most important one, with even those who did hastening to add that it had not affected their decision to volunteer. Even taking

into account that some volunteers may have altered their answer due to assuming an expectation against being motivated by remuneration, the result still seems clear enough to state that the gift pack was not a major motivation.

Olohan's discussion on altruism as a tool to understand volunteer translation was helpful in the last section, comparing the answers to the three main questions. I did not, however, go very far in utilising Olohan's distinction between pure and impure altruism. According to Olohan, impure altruism may include egoistical, or utilitarian, motivation such as a sense of duty, a feeling of guilt, the expectation of reward or a warm glow – and at least two of these are present in the answers of Popmundo's volunteer translators.

A sense of duty or obligation was an undercurrent in most of the mentions of a desire to help the community or players in the cases where the community was specified as the one the volunteer belonged to in contrast to a more general desire to help the players of the game. The other factor that was frequently present in the answers was the warm glow, as they often incorporated elements of both a desire to help and a sense of satisfaction that helping gave the volunteers. I did not observe any instances of feelings of guilt in the results, and the expectation of reward as such was not mentioned either, considering how the importance of the volunteer gift pack was downplayed by the respondents – although it is possible that it was present as an unstated motivation for some.

It is much more difficult, however, to ascertain whether pure altruism was present in the answers. Some instances of the desire to help other players and most of those mentioning the desire to contribute to the game were not linked to motivation categorised as impure altruism, but the volunteers not mentioning they get satisfaction from helping is hardly proof of it not happening. This seems to be one instance where open questions fail to get to the heart of the matter, and some other approach would be required to arrive at more certain answers to the distinction between pure and impure altruism in the volunteer translators' motivation.

As altruistic and utilitarian motivation were merely conceptual tools used in the analysis in my thesis, I do not consider this a failure of my chosen method as such. The themes I arrived at could just as well have been conceptualised for ease of understanding using the other dichotomies introduced in section 3.2: intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, or personal or social motivation. These dichotomies would have highlighted slightly different aspects of the results, but due to space constraints, I have here chosen to use only one.

To briefly discuss intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, however, as it was the dichotomy used by McDonough Dolmaya in her 2012 study, intrinsic motivation far outnumbered extrinsic motivation in the study in question, whereas the two studies on the motivation of volunteers in FOSS projects heavily featured both types of motivation. Although intrinsic and extrinsic motivation do not correspond to altruistic and utilitarian motivation perfectly, there is considerable overlap. For this reason, it is interesting to note that the results in my thesis seem to be closer to the FOSS studies than that of McDonough Dolmaya: altruistic and utilitarian motivation had an equal share in initial motivation, but utilitarian motivation prevailed in the motivation to continue in the position.

However, although McDonough Dolmaya studied volunteer translators and the FOSS studies concerned coding, the type of volunteering does not seem to be as important a factor as the type of crowdsourcing environment. McDonough Dolmaya hypothesised that the difference is influenced by the FOSS initiatives being product-driven compared to the Wikipedia's cause-driven nature. Popmundo is similar to FOSS initiatives in that it is a product-driven endeavour, and my findings thus appear to support McDonough Dolmaya's hypothesis.

Désilets & van der Meer's study further states that the type of organisation, whether for-profit or non-profit, for instance, is not important either, claiming that the success of crowdsourcing endeavours is based more on the emotional investment of the volunteer translators. Based on the answers given by the volunteer translators of Popmundo, it is easy to observe that a large share of Popmundo's volunteer translators are emotionally invested in the game, as demonstrated by their desire to contribute to the game, frequently formulated as a desire to 'give something back'.

In section 3.3, I posited the assumption that the perceived ethicality of Popmundo affects the motivation of the game's volunteer translators – describing the three major aspects related to the ethics of crowdsourcing as introduced by McDonough Dolmaya: remuneration, visibility and minor languages. Remuneration was already discussed above – despite the fact that the lack of remuneration in for-profit endeavours is oft criticised, it did not seem to have an effect on the motivation of Popmundo's volunteer translators. This reinforces the above view of Désilets & van der Meer that the type of organisation is not particularly important.

Translator visibility could be considered to play a small role in the motivation of Popmundo's volunteer translators, as status or influence was present as a source of motivation in all three



main questions, and visibility – the volunteer translators being named by their character names on a specific page on the site as well as identified as translators on their character pages – does provide the translators a certain status, if not prestige.

As for minor languages, Popmundo has a fairly large number of minor languages available as playable languages in the game, and the motivational factor of a sense of obligation or desire to help one's own language community was frequently referred to by volunteer translators working on minor languages. In section 4.3.1, I wondered whether the close relationship I considered the translators working with minor languages in the game and their language communities would prove to be more of a positive motivational factor or increased pressure. Based on the answers to the questionnaire, the relationship emerged clearly more as a source of motivation, with only one respondent mentioning that the users of their language could be harsh in their criticism of the translation – but, of course, I did not ask about the volunteer translators' feelings of pressure in the questionnaire.

My expectation of Popmundo's for-profit status not affecting the volunteer translators' motivation receives some additional support from the respondents' answers to the question on the types of organisation they would and would not be willing to do volunteer translation for: the size of the organisation and simply having a cause or project the volunteers could agree with seemed to be more important than the type of organisation – many stated outright that they would not volunteer for large organisations.

The expectation of Popmundo's developers, as recounted by Neffling, on the motivation of the game's volunteer translators was to arise firstly from enjoyment of and interest in the work and secondly from the desire to contribute to the game and help its players. As such, the developers refer to both altruistic and utilitarian motivation and manage to name three of the major motivating factors mentioned by the translators themselves in their answers to my questionnaire – demonstrating shrewd insight into the motivation of their volunteers. Of particular interest is that the developers do not mention the volunteer gift pack among factors they believe motivate the volunteer translators – situating it firmly as a gift, as the name suggests.

The background questions I asked from Popmundo's volunteer translators reveal that professional translators, those with translator training and those with knowledge of TS are in a clear minority among the respondents and, most likely, among Popmundo's volunteer translators as a whole. This may go some way to explain why the motivation of the volunteer

translators did not feature professional aspirations related to translation. This seems further to correspond with the findings in studies by Olohan on TED and McDonough Dolmaya on Wikipedia – in the former, none of the respondents admitted to professional aspirations and, in the latter, those with translator training were in the minority. With Wikipedia, though, over one fourth did have a degree or training in translation.

The fact that a slight majority of the respondents would not practice translation simultaneously both professionally and as a volunteer and many of those who would set conditions for the situations in which they would find it acceptable obviously explains the lack of professional aspirations to some extent, as well – the answers demonstrated an objection towards combining the two in most situations as a matter of principle.

Even though the volunteer translators had no professional aspirations in the field of translation, they still considered the acquisition of skills that can be applied outside the game an important benefit of acting as a volunteer translator. The skills honed while acting as a volunteer translator – whether language skills, translation skills or even PR skills – were thus still important for the professional and personal lives of some of Popmundo's volunteer translators.

The volunteer translators of Popmundo showed long commitment to their volunteer positions, which suggests that – despite the somewhat changing motivational factors between their initial motivation to become a translator and their motivation to continue in the position – their motivation still remains high enough for many to continue. On the other hand, slightly over half of the respondents had considered resigning from the position, with time management clearly the main issue that would counter the positive motivational factors enough to make many resign. The inadequate performance of fellow volunteer translators was another demotivating factor mentioned by several respondents. Demotivating factors among volunteers – factors that would make them stop volunteering – have not been studied much in studies on motivation (Olohan 2014, 29), which makes this an interesting finding. However, my questionnaire, too, focused on motivation instead of demotivation, and the latter would need to be studied in more detail for anything more than the above anecdotal result.

Comparing my main findings to the studies by Olohan (2014), McDonough Dolmaya (2012) and O'Brien & Schäler (2010), there are many similarities but also certain differences. All the above studies reported support for the cause of the organisation the volunteers translated for as the main motivation – which corresponds to my category of 'contributing to the game', which

shared the status of top motivation with ‘enjoyment of the work’. Enjoyment of the work, or intellectual stimulation, was similarly a major motivating factor for volunteers in all studies. Acquiring skills or experience, however, featured heavily as motivation among volunteers in McDonough Dolmaya’s and O’Brien & Schäler’s studies, but not among Olohan’s TED volunteer translators – in my results, it was of minor importance as initial motivation but fairly common as motivation to continue in the position. The final major motivational factor of Popmundo’s volunteer translators was helping the users or community, but this was not available as an option in O’Brien & Schäler’s study. In McDonough Dolmaya’s study, the closest corresponding option of being part of a network was not of particular relevance, but Olohan found ‘community participation’ to be a recurrent motivation among TED translators.

## 8 Conclusions

The volunteer translators of Popmundo provide the game with an important contribution by volunteering to localise the game which, without them, would not be as globally accessible as it is at present. The game is a small, developer-owned game that could not afford professional translation on the scale required to offer the game in as many languages as it is now available in, and this state of affairs seems to be acknowledged by its volunteer translators.

The motivation of Popmundo's volunteer translators proved to be quite varied in terms of the number of themes I identified from the answers, but the results still follow along the lines of previous research on the motivation of volunteer translators. In my analysis of the answers, I focused on three main questions on motivation, of which two concerned motivation directly – the translators' initial motivation to become a volunteer translator in the game and their motivation to continue in the position despite receiving no monetary reward – and one provided additional information through asking the volunteer translators about the benefits they feel they receive from the activity. In addition to the three main questions, the questionnaire featured some other motivation-related questions as well as background questions that provided additional insights and context.

The volunteer translators' initial motivation arose mainly from four motivational factors, which were, in order of mentions in the answers: the desire to contribute to the game or help out, enjoyment of the work itself, a sense of obligation towards the community and dissatisfaction with the previous translation. Motivation to work for no monetary reward, on the other hand, which can be conceptualised as motivation to continue in the position, featured three main themes in the answers. These are, again, in the order of mentions in the answers: enjoyment of the work, the desire to contribute to the game and the desire to help players.

The main difference between initial motivation and motivation to continue in the position was with dissatisfaction with the previous translation disappearing – which is logical, as the translators have had the opportunity to change the parts of the translation they were dissatisfied with. In addition to this difference, the share of altruistic motivation in comparison with utilitarian motivation decreases significantly – all themes outside the main themes I identified in the answers to the question on motivation to work for no monetary reward were utilitarian in nature, with the desire to improve skills or acquire experience especially common.

The main benefits the volunteer translators considered to receive from volunteering were improving skills or acquiring experience that can be applied outside the game, helping their language community and enjoyment of the work, with the first and third of the above benefits the ones considered the most important by more respondents than helping their community. The volunteer gift pack given to the translators was mentioned as a benefit by a large share of the volunteer translators but only by three as the most important benefit – all who mentioned it downplayed its importance to some extent. The perceived benefits category differed in some respects from the other two categories – chiefly with in-game benefits and improving skills or getting experience mentioned more frequently and contributing to the game less frequently – but this can most likely be explained by the volunteer translators’ perception of the category of benefit. It is apparent that the volunteer gift pack, clearly identified as a benefit by the respondents, was not a major motivation to the volunteer translators of Popmundo, for instance.

Categorising the different motivational factors into altruistic and utilitarian motivation, we arrive at an overall picture of the motivation of Popmundo’s volunteer translators that shows altruistic and utilitarian motivation receiving the same number of mentions for initial motivation, but utilitarian motivation receiving almost two thirds of the mentions for motivation to work for no monetary reward. However, I am hesitant to consider this a conclusive result: the figures are based on the number of mentions of individual themes in the answers, and there were simply more separate themes categorised under utilitarian motivation than under altruistic motivation, with the mentions clustering under two themes within altruistic motivation. More importantly, I did not ask the respondents how much each motivational factor motivated them, which means that the share of utilitarian and altruistic motivation does not necessarily represent their importance to the volunteer translators.

Insofar as utilitarian motivation was slightly more prevalent in comparison to altruistic motivation among Popmundo’s volunteer translators, the findings seem to provide some support to McDonough Dolmaya’s hypothesis that the type of volunteer activity or whether the organisation is for- or non-profit does not have as much influence on the share of utilitarian versus altruistic motivation of the volunteers as does the nature of the volunteering endeavour as product-driven or cause-driven – Popmundo’s product-driven nature would thus account for the larger share of utilitarian motivation among its volunteer translators. This would, however, require further study to confirm the connection.

The questionnaire results seem to further indicate that emotional investment in the game is visible as the desire to contribute, or give something back, to the game, that the small size of the organisation (particularly in the case of a for-profit company) is an important factor for motivation and that the volunteer translators working with minor languages in particular are motivated by a sense of obligation.

Despite a fairly high response rate for an online questionnaire, some reservations should be retained in relation to the results of my questionnaire – I cannot claim them to represent Popmundo's volunteer translators' motivation with absolute certainty. As a case study, the results cannot be generalised to volunteer translators involved in game localisation in general, either, but they do still provide a good starting point for understanding the motivation of volunteer translators in such environments.

My questionnaire proved to include certain formulations that caused slight misunderstandings or confusion among the respondents, such as them perceiving some of the questions as asking essentially the same thing and the question on initial motivation including the implicit assumption of all translators having applied for their position. However, the formulation of the questions does not seem to have affected the answers in such a way that would render any results useless.

Motivation of volunteer translators has garnered increasing attention during the 2010s, but established methods that would provide comparable results still appear to be lacking. As such, the topic still invites further study in general. During the course of making my thesis and consulting related literature, I encountered interesting directions within the study of volunteer (translator) motivation that I believe worthy of studying in more detail yet have not attracted all that much research. These include the study of demotivating factors – what makes volunteer translators stop volunteering – and focusing attention on not only the motivating factors themselves but also the relative weight of each factor in an individual's motivation – an admittedly difficult proposition that would likely require an entirely different approach from questionnaire-based research.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Questionnaire

#### Questionnaire for Volunteer Translators of Popmundo

You know me as Patrik Paulsson, but in real life I am Petri Jones, a Translation Studies student working on my Master's Thesis. The answers to this questionnaire will form the data for the thesis, which deals with the identity of volunteer translators and their motivations for volunteering. The answers will only be used towards this purpose and will be handled confidentially. Your character's names will not be used in the thesis.

The questionnaire takes approximately 10-15 minutes to fill and I would appreciate submitting your answers on July 7 at the latest. Most of the questions in the questionnaire require an answer (these are marked with a green asterisk), but you can decide for yourself how much detail you want to give. Additional question marks after a question provide some additional clarification on that question when you hover your cursor over them.

In case you need any clarification or wish to contact me for anything related to the questionnaire, you can send me an email at [jones.petri.a@student.uta.fi](mailto:jones.petri.a@student.uta.fi)

#### You in Popmundo

\* What is your character's name?

\* What language do you translate in Popmundo?

#### Background Information

The questions in this and the following sections concern you in real life, not your character.

What is your gender?

- \* I am ☐ male  
☐ female  
☐ other

How old are you?

- |       | -19                   | 20-29                 | 30-39                 | 40-49                 | 50-                   |
|-------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| * Age | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

\* What is your native language?

\* Have you received translator training? ?

If you want to, you may elaborate here on the type of training you have received.

## You as a translator outside Popmundo

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Have you practiced translation outside Popmundo? ?

- ☐ Yes, professionally
- ☐ Yes, as a volunteer translator
- ☐ Yes, for a family member / friend
- ☐ Yes, for myself
- ☐ No

\* How would you describe your relationship with Translation Studies (the academic study of translation)? ?

--Select--

\* Do you aspire to become a professional translator? ?

--Select--

## You as a translator in Popmundo

---

\* How long have you been a volunteer translator in Popmundo?  
?

--Select--

\* Why did you decide to apply for a position as a volunteer translator in Popmundo? ?

\* What kind of quality do you produce, in your own opinion? ?

\* How much time do you use on translation in Popmundo during an average week (in hours)? ?

\* What kinds of benefits have you received / feel you might receive from being a volunteer translator? What is the most important benefit to you?

\* Have you ever considered resigning as a translator? If so, what would have been / be the most important reason?

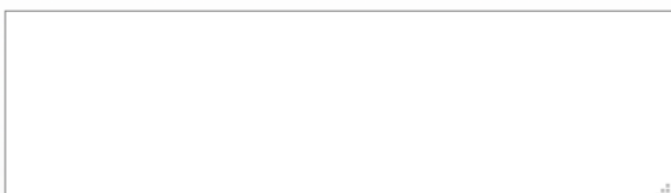
## Volunteer translation and ethics

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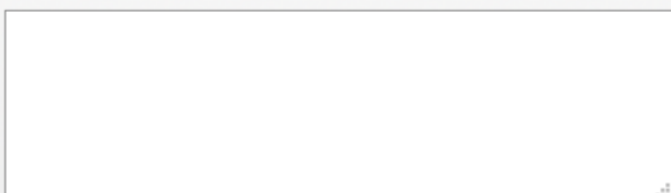
- \* As a volunteer translator, you are expected to use a lot of your free time for translation with no monetary reward (excluding credits and VIP). What are the most important reasons you are willing to do this?



- \* What kinds of organisations would you be willing to do volunteer translation for? Are there any that you definitely would not do it for? ?



- \* Could you imagine practicing translation simultaneously both professionally and on a volunteer basis? Why? / Why not?



## Feedback

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Anything else you want to say on the subject of volunteer translation or on the questionnaire?

If you wish to receive a link to the finished thesis when it is ready, please check the box below. I will contact you in Popmundo when the time comes. If you want me to contact you outside Popmundo instead, please add your email address in the text field below.

I want to know when the ☐ thesis is ready.

Email address

# Vapaaehtoiskääntäjien motivaatio selainpeli Popmundossa

## Johdanto

Käsittelen tutkielmassani selaimessa pelattavan Popmundo-nimisen roolipelin vapaaehtoiskääntäjien motivaatiota: miksi he päättivät alkaa vapaaehtoiskääntäjiksi, millaisia hyötyjä he kokevat toiminnasta saavansa ja minkä vuoksi he toimivat tehtävissään ilman rahallista korvausta. Vastauksia näihin kysymyksiin selvitän kääntäjille lähetetyn kyselyn avulla.

Olen itse toiminut vapaaehtoiskääntäjänä yli yhdeksän vuoden ajan, ja matkani ammattimaiseen kääntäjäyteen sijoittuu kokonaisuudessaan tälle aikavälille. Yhtenä tekijänä tutkimusaiheen valinnassa onkin toiminut omat eettiset pohdintani vapaaehtois- ja ammattimaisen kääntämisen yhdistämisestä. Tästä syystä olen kiinnostunut vapaaehtoiskääntämisessä nimenomaan kääntäjien motivaatiosta. Samalla se, että olen itse toiminut tutkimassani pelissä vapaaehtoisena luo minulle kaksoisroolin vapaaehtoiskääntäjänä ja tutkijana: voin tuntea lojaalisuutta yhtäältä peliä ja toisaalta akateemisen objektiivisuuden ihannetta kohtaan (Koskinen 2008, 9). Toisaalta asemani tarjoaa minulle ainutlaatuisen perspektiivin pelin käännösprosessiin.

Olen tutkielmassani halunnut painottaa vapaaehtoiskääntäjien omaa toimijuutta ja ääntä, mikä näkyy erityisesti kyselyn valikoitumisessa aineistonkeruutavaksi sekä verrattain runsaassa aineistoesimerkkien käytössä. Kyselyn toteutin verkkokyselynä, jonka jaoin vapaaehtoiskääntäjille pelin sisäisellä foorumilla. Yhteensä 22 pelissä toimivasta 51 kääntäjästä vastasi kyselyyn.

Keräämäni aineiston analyysin suoritin pääosin laadullisesti teemoittelua käyttäen. Analyysitapani seuraa pääpiirteittäin Virginia Braunin ja Victoria Clarken (2006) luomaa kuusivaiheista mallia, jossa tutustutaan aineistoon, ryhmitellään aineisto, nimetään, uudelleennimetään ja tarkastellaan identifioituja teemoja ja kirjoitetaan tämän pohjalta analyysi.

Kontekstualisoin Popmundon käännöstoimintaa esittelemällä lyhyesti pelilokalisaaion teoriaa ja käytäntöjä sekä toisaalta vapaaehtoiskääntäjien motiivien tutkimusta. Esittelen lisäksi Popmundon käännöstoimintaa – itse pelin, organisaation ja toimintaympäristön samoin kuin varsinaisen käännösprosessin. Tämän jälkeen esittelen käyttämäni kyselyn ja valitsemani analyysimetodin, kokoon yhteen analyysini tuloksia sekä teen tulosten perusteella joitain johtopäätöksiä.



## Vapaaehtoiskääntäminen ja motiivit

Määrittelen tutkielmassani vapaaehtoiskääntämisen Olohaniin (2014, 19) pohjaten ”käännöstyöksi, jota toteuttavat ihmiset tekevät käännöstyötä vapaasta tahdostaan ilman palkkiota, joka on muodollisesti järjestäytynyttä ja jota tehdään toisten hyväksi<sup>12</sup>”. Työlleni relevantti on myös Snyder & Omoton (2008, 3) lisäys, jonka mukaan palkkio itsessään ei määrittele vapaaehtoisuutta; sen määrittää ennemminkin se, että vapaaehtoinen suorittaa toiminnan *odottamatta* palkkiota.

Vapaaehtoiskääntämisen suhde ammattimaiseen kääntämiseen on jossain määrin muutostilassa informaatio- ja viestintä teknologian ja erityisesti Internetin kehityksen myötä. Ammattimaisen kääntämisen muutospainet – esimerkiksi kilpailun ja tehokkuusvaatimusten lisääntyminen ja monikansallisten yritysten dominointi käännösmarkkinoilla – ovat fragmentoineet käännösammattilaisuutta ja osaltaan luoneet kysyntää myös rahamarkkinoiden ulkopuolella tapahtuvalle käännöstoiminnalle. (Talvikallio 2014, 1, 22.) Vapaaehtoiskääntämisen nousu on nähty toisinaan uhkana (Irjala 2017, 16; Flanagan 2016, 157–163), toisinaan mahdollisuutena ja positiivisena trendinä (O’Hagan 2011, 13–15; Irjala 2017, 17). Kiinnostus vapaaehtoiskääntämisen tutkimukseen on lisääntynyt selvästi 2000-luvulla, ja erityisesti Internetissä tapahtuvan vapaaehtoiskääntämisen kehityksen myötä on erityisesti siihen alettu kiinnittää huomiota (Talvikallio 2014, 14–15).

Vapaaehtoiskääntämiseen ja siihen läheisesti liittyviin ilmiöihin on myös viitattu hyvin moninaisilla termeillä – kollaboratiivisesta kääntämisestä joukkoistamiseen (*collaborative translation, crowdsourcing*; Pym 2012) ja käyttäjälähtöisestä kääntämisestä (*user-generated translation*, Perrino 2009) yhteisökääntämiseen (*community translation*, O’Hagan 2011). Käytän tutkielmassani termiä vapaaehtoiskääntäminen (*volunteer translation*) sen yksinkertaisuuden ja selvyyden vuoksi.

Vapaaehtoistoimijoiden motiivien tutkimuksessa käytetään jossain määrin apuna tiettyjä tapoja jaotella motiiveja; näistä hyödynnän analyysissäni erityisesti Olohanin (2012, 196–197) käyttämää jakoa altruistisiin ja egoistisiin, tai utilitaristisiin, motiiveihin. Olohan (2012, 196–197) jakaa altruistiset motiivit edelleen puhtaisiin ja epäpuhtaisiin altruistisiin motiiveihin, joista jälkimmäisessä altruismiin sekoittuu myös egoismia – esimerkiksi velvollisuudentuntoa,

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<sup>12</sup> Olen kääntänyt tämän ja muut lyhennelmässä esiintyvät lainaukset itse englannista suomeksi.

syllisyyttä, oletus palkkion saamisesta tai altruistisesta käytöksestä itsestään seuraava tyytyväisyyden tunne.

Aiemmasta vapaaehtoiskääntäjien tutkimuksesta erityisen tärkeitä tutkielmani kannalta ovat McDonough Dolmayan (2012) ja O'Brien & Schälerin (2010) tutkimukset. Ensin mainitussa sisäsyntyiset (*intrinsic*) motiivit osoittautuivat selvästi ulkosyntyisiä (*extrinsic*) yleisemmiksi, kun taas jälkimmäisessä vapaaehtoiskääntäjien motivaatioon kuului yhtä lailla henkilökohtaista (*personal*) kuin sosiaalistakin (*social*) motivaatiota. Jo nämä tutkimukset yhdessä mainitsemieni Olohanin käyttämien motiivien jakotapojen kanssa osoittavat, ettei vapaaehtoiskääntämisen tutkimuksessa vielä ole täysin vakiintunutta tapaa jaotella motiiveja.

Tukeudun tutkielmassani lisäksi jossain määrin McDonough Dolmayan (2011) esittämiin kolmeen keskeiseen joukkoistamisprojektiin liittyvään eettiseen aspektiin: palkkioon, näkyvyyteen ja pienten kielten asemaan. Oletuksenani on, että vapaaehtoiskääntäjien käsitys siitä, kuinka McDonough Dolmayan esittämiä аспектеjä käsitellään Popmundossa sen käännöstoiminnan yhteydessä, vaikuttaa vapaaehtoisten motivaatioon.

### **Tutkimuksen konteksti: pelilokalisaatio ja Popmundo**

Popmundon käännöstoiminnan voidaan katsoa edustavan pelilokalisaatiota. Pelilokalisaatiossa on kyse uuden kieliversion luomisesta ja ylläpitämisestä olemassa olevalle pelille joko yhtäaikaaisesti alkuperäisen kieliversion luomisen kanssa tai sen jälkeen. Pelilokalisaation prosessi kehittyi ”potentiaalisesti äärettömät versiot” ja ”säännöllisen päivittämisen” mahdollistavan ”uuden teknologisen alustan” myötä (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 105).

Pelilokalisaation tunnuspiirteitä ovat alkutekstin merkityksen pientyminen, kontekstuaalisen informaation usein vähäinen määrä ja luovuuden korostaminen (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 105, 107–108, 119). Pelilokalisaatiossa keskeistä on myös ottaa huomioon pelimaailmojen globalisoitunut luonne, jonka vuoksi kieliversioiden välinen vastaavuus on erityisen tärkeää. Tähän kiinnitetään huomiota esimerkiksi kulttuurisen lokalisaation avulla. (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 113, 211.)

Käännöstieteessä pelilokalisaatiota kohtaan on alettu osoittaa enenevässä määrin kiinnostusta tämän vuosituhaten puolella, ja tutkimuksessa on keskitytty esimerkiksi ilmiön konseptualisointiin, kulturalisaatioon, prosessin toimijoiden väliseen vuorovaikutukseen, tekstitypologioihin, saavutettavuuteen fanikäntämiseen sekä kääntäjien koulutukseen liittyviin tekijöihin (O'Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 34–39).

Popmundo itsessään on selainpohjainen MMORPG, eli massiivinen monen pelaajan verkkoroolipeli. Se on pienen, Spelkultur i Sverige AB -nimisen yrityksen kehittämä musiikkiteollisuuteen sijoittuva peli, jossa pelaajien välisellä vuorovaikutuksella on keskeinen rooli. Pelillä on kolme pelinkehittäjää, ja verrattain laaja joukko vapaaehtoisia, jotka toimivat kääntämisen lisäksi useassa muussakin roolissa pelissä. Vapaaehtoiset saavat työpanoksestaan lahjaksi niin sanotun VIP-paketin, jonka pelin tavalliset käyttäjät voivat ostaa rahaa vastaan.

Pelinä Popmundo on moniulotteinen – sen ytimessä on musiikkiteollisuus, jossa pelaajat hallinnoivat bändejä esiintyen, levyjä äänittäen ja kilpaillen, mutta peliin kuuluu myös monia muita osa-alueita politiikasta rikollisuuteen ja yritysmaailmasta hahmojen välisiin suhteisiin. Pelissä ei ole varsinaista loppupistettä vaan pelaajat voivat valita omat tavoitteensa itse. Tapahtumat etenevät reaaliajassa, ja pääasiallisena mekanismina, jolla pelihahmot kehittyvät ja operoivat pelimaailmassa, toimivat satunnaisesti, noin kahdesti päivässä tapahtuvat hahmopäivitykset, joihin pelaajat voivat valita hahmoilleen haluamansa prioriteetit. Peli on tekstipohjainen, ja siinä oli vuonna 2015 noin 1,2 miljoonaa merkkiä, tai noin 600 A4-sivua tekstiä (Neffling 2015).

Popmundossa on yhteensä 24 aktiivista kieltä, joilla tavalliset käyttäjät voivat pelata peliä, sekä muutamia kieliä, joiden käännösprosessi on kesken ja jotka ovat inaktiivisia. Pelin kieliin sisältyy odotettujen kielten ohella myös joitain suomen, viron ja kroatian kaltaisia pienempiä kieliä. Pelissä oli kyselyn toteuttamisajankohtana vuonna 2015 yhteensä 51 aktiivisten kielten parissa toimivaa kääntäjää – kehittäjät pyrkivät pitämään kääntäjien määrän yhtä kieltä kohden kahdessa kääntäjässä. Kääntäjillä on lisäksi sisäinen, kaksiportainen hierarkia, jonka ylemmällä tasolla toimivat vanhemmat kääntäjät muun muassa osallistuvat kääntäjien rekrytointiprosessiin, valvovat kieliversioiden statusta ja toimivat linkkinä pelinkehittäjien ja kääntäjien viestinnässä. Pelissä toimii kaksi vanhempaa kääntäjää.

Käännöstoimintaa fasilitoimassa pelissä on erityinen, toisen salasanan suojaama käännöskäyttöliittymä, jonne uudet tekstit ilmaantuvat kääntäjille käännettäväksi. Käyttöliittymässä kääntäjät voivat muun muassa kääntää tekstejä, nähdä viimeisimmät kieliversiossaan tehdyt muutokset, lukea kääntäjille annettuja ohjeita, sääntöjä ja käännösetiketin sekä nähdä eri käännösversioiden tilanteen (käännetyn tekstin prosenttiosuuden käännettävänä olevasta tekstistä). Kääntäjillä on lisäksi sisäistä sekä kääntäjien ja pelinkehittäjien välistä viestintää varten erillinen foorumi, jonka pääsyoikeus on rajattu.

Popmundon vapaaehtoisikäntäjät saavat suorittaa varsinaisen käännoistyön verrattain itsenäisesti; käännoikäyttöliittymässä olevien ohjeiden lisäksi kehittäjät ohjeistavat käntäjiä melko vähäisissä määrin. Popmundon käännoistoimintaa määrittäviä keskeisiä piirteitä ovat tilarajoitteet, käännoiksissä käytettävät muuttujat eli tietokannasta tekstinpätkiin haettavat termit (O’Hagan & Mangiron 2013, 131–134), kontekstin puute (O’Hagan 2005, 3–4), kulttuuriviittaukset ja pelimekaniikkaan liittyvä terminologia.

Kehittäjien odotukset vapaaehtoisikäntäjiä kohtaan rajoittuvat ymmärrettävän käännoksen tuottamiseen siten, että ”varsinainen informaatio” pysyy sellaisenaan, mutta toisaalta käännoksiin voi lisätä ”paikallista väriä” (Neffling 2015). Kehittäjät itse olettavat käntäjien motivaation kumpuavan yhtäältä ”aidosta kiinnostuksesta” sekä mielenkiinnosta tointa kohtaan ja toisaalta halusta auttaa peliä ja pelaajia (Neffling 2015).

## **Kysely ja analyysimetodi**

Käytin aineistonkeruun metodinani Popmundon käntäjille lähetettyä kyselyä. Kyselyt ovat varsin suosittu aineistonkeruutapa, koska niiden avulla on mahdollista kerätä jäsentynyt, laajamittainen aineisto nopeammin kuin yksilöhaastatteluin (Saldanha & O’Brien 2013, 152). Niihin liittyy toisaalta kuitenkin myös sudenkuoppia, jotka tutkijan tulee pyrkiä välttämään hyvällä suunnittelulla: vastaajat voivat muuttaa käyttäytymistään tutkimustilanteessa tai olla varovainen vastauksissaan, vastausaste voi jäädä matalaksi, riittävän otannan hankkimisessa voi olla hankaluuksia ja kyselyn tulee olla huolella suunniteltu ja jaettu, jotta aineisto vastaa tutkimuskysymykseen (Saldanha & O’Brien 2013, 152–153).

Myös valinta avointen ja suljettujen kysymysten – ja sitä myötä, ainakin osin, laadullisen ja määrällisen datan välillä on tärkeä (Saldanha & O’Brien 2013, 153–158), minkä lisäksi kyselyiden käyttöön liittyy eettistä pohdintaa esimerkiksi anonymiteettiin ja luottamuksellisuuteen liittyen (Saldanha & O’Brien 2013, 161–162). Verkkokyselyihin liittyviä erityisiä huolenaiheita ovat matala vastausaste jopa kyselyiden sisällä, vastaajien potentiaalinen ulossulkeminen, huono edustavuus sekä hankaluudet vastaajien identiteetin vahvistamisessa (Saldanha & O’Brien 2013, 166–167).

Kyselyitä on käytetty varsin paljon niiden tutkimusten joukossa, joissa tutkitaan vapaaehtoisikäntäjien motivaatiota (esim. McDonough Dolmaya 2012, O’Brien & Schäler 2010, Irjala 2017 ja Talvikallio 2014).

Esittelin tutkimukseni Popmundon vapaaehtoisikäntäjille ensimmäisen kerran 31.1.2015 kääntäjien foorumilla varmistaakseni riittävän vastaajajoukon ja keskustellakseni anonymiteetista etukäteen mahdollisten vastaajien kanssa. Keskustelu myös johti anonymiteetin parantamiseen. Varmistin lisäksi pelin kehittäjiltä, että he hyväksyvät kyselyn jakamisen pelin sisällä. Kyselyluonnosta kommentoivat sekä graduohjaajani että viisi testikäyttäjänä toiminutta ystävääni, joiden kommenttien pohjalta parantelin kyselyä, joka on lopullisessa muodossaan nähtävissä liitteessä 1 (Appendix 1).

Toteutin kyselyn Tampereen yliopiston elomake-työkalulla. Kyselyyn sisältyi kuusi lyhyttä, teemoittain jaettua sivua, joissa käsitellään kääntäjien ja heidän pelihahmojensa taustaa, kääntäjien käänköskokemusta pelin sisällä ja ulkopuolella, kääntäjien näkemyksiä vapaaehtoisikäntämisestä ja etiikasta sekä palautetta kyselystä. Kyselyn motivaatioon liittyvät kysymykset olivat pääosin avoimia. Vapaaehtoisikäntäjillä oli mahdollisuus vastata kyselyyn 16.6.2015–7.7.2015 välisenä aikana, ja vastauksia kertyi 22 kappaletta.

Pyrin kiinnittämään huomiota mainitsemiini verkkokyselyihin liittyviin ongelmakohtiin. Matalaa vastausastetta pyrin ehkäisemään motivoimalla vapaaehtoisikäntäjiä vastaamaan arpomalla vastaajien kesken pelinsisäisiä palkintoja sekä taustoittamalla kyselyn relevanssia keskustelemalla siitä kääntäjien kanssa. Ulussulkemisen mahdollisuuden koin pieneksi, koska koko kohderyhmällä selvästi oli käytössään Internet-yhteys. Joukon edustavuuden osalta kyselyyn jäi epävarmuustekijöitä, sillä en voi olla varma, ettei vastaajajoukko eroa jollain tavoin kaikista Popmundon vapaaehtoisikäntäjistä – tämä ei kuitenkaan ole liian suuri haittatekijä tapaustutkimuksen kaltaisessa tutkimuksessa. Vastaajien identiteetin varmistamiseksi pyysin kyselyssä vastaajia ilmoittamaan hahmonsa nimen, jota vakuutin käyttämäni vain varmistaakseni, että kyseessä oli vapaaehtoisikäntäjä.

Käytin analyysimetodinani teemoittelua. Kyseessä on aineistolähtöinen metodi, jossa laadullisesta aineistosta tunnistetaan teemoja (Maguire & Delahunt 2017, 3352) ja jossa tutkijan tulkinta aineistosta korostuu (Braun & Clarke 2006, 7). Pyrin vastauksia teemoitellessani löytämään elementtejä, jotka kertovat vapaaehtoisikäntäjien motivaatiosta jotain olennaista – en niinkään pelkästään kuvaamaan eri teemojen esiintymistiheyttä. Teemoittelun sisällä metodiini sisältyy myös analysoijalähtöisyyttä puhtaan aineistolähtöisyyden sijaan – käyttämäni teemoittelu on enemmän teoreettista kuin induktiivista ja pohjaa ”tutkijan teoreettiseen tai analyttiseen kiinnostukseen aihetta kohtaan” (Braun & Clarke 2006, 12). Analyysini keskittyy semanttiselle tasolle.

Analyysimetodini valintaan vaikutti jossain määrin Olohanin (2014) kritiikki McDonough Dolmayan (2012) ja O'Brien & Schälerin tutkimuksia kohtaan. Olohanin (2014, 21) mukaan ennakkoon määritellyt vastausvaihtoehdot tuottavat ”vaikeuksia motivaation a prioriseen tulkintaan sellaisen vapaaehtoistoiminnan kohdalla, jota on tähän saakka tutkittu vain vähän”. Näin vastaajien vastausvaihtoehtojen rajoittaminen uhkaa sivuuttaa sellaiset motiivit, joita kyselyn vaihtoehdoiksi ei olla otettu (Olohan 2014, 27). Olohan tarjoaa vastaukseksi niin sanottua konstruktivistista grounded theorya, jota en käytä sinällään – mutta käytännössä teemoittelua käyttämällä ”identifioin ja kategorisoin motiiveja vapaaehtoiskääntäjien diskurssin perusteella” (Olohan 2014, 23) jossain määrin samalla tavalla.

Pohjaan analyysissani Braun & Clarken (2006) kuusivaiheiseen prosessiin, jossa 1) tutustutaan aineistoon, 2) luodaan alustavat koodit, 3) etsitään teemoja, 4) tarkastellaan teemoja, 5) määritellään ja nimetään teemat, ja 6) tuotetaan kirjallinen analyysi. Prosessin vaiheita ei toteuteta suoraan tässä järjestyksessä, vaan niissä edetään osin samanaikaisesti niin, että esimerkiksi kirjoittaminen kulkee analyysin mukana läpi prosessin. Käytin tätä prosessia erityisesti kolmen tärkeimmäksi kokemani, motivaatioon liittyvän kysymyksen vastausten analysoimisessa.

Analyysissäni jaoin aineiston ensin kahteen kategoriaan: motivaatioon liittyvään ja liittymättömään aineistoon, joista keskityin ensin mainittuun. Käytin analyysini tukena aineistosta identifioimieni teemojen ohella myös jakoa utilitaristiseen ja altruistiseen motivaatioon – en niinkään väittäkseni, että motivaatio voidaan selkeästi jakaa näihin kahteen lokeroon, kuin havainnollistaakseni analyysiä ja toisaalta kyetäkseni helpommin vertailemaan tuloksia aiempaan tutkimukseen.

## **Keskeiset tulokset**

Kyselyyn vastanneista Popmundon kääntäjistä valtaosa (81,8 %) oli naisia, ja suurin osa oli kaksi- (40,9 %) tai kolmekymppisiä (31,8 %) – joskin kaikki ikäryhmät alle kaksikymppisistä yli viisikymmenvuotiaisiin olivat edustettuina. Kääntäjien kohdekielenä oli pääasiassa eurooppalaisia kieliä, ja kaikkien kohdekieli oli sama kuin heidän äidinkieltensä. Suurin osa (86,4 %) ei ollut saanut minkäänlaista kääntäjänkoulutusta. Osa kääntäjistä oli pelin ulkopuolella harjoittanut kääntämistä joko vapaaehtoispuolelta (54,5 %), ystävilleen tai perheelleen (77,3 %) tai itselleen (54,5 %). Noin kahdella kolmasosalla (63,6 %) oli hyvin vähän tai ei lainkaan kokemusta tai tietoa käännöstieteestä, ja yhtä suurella osalla (63,6 %) ei

ollut ammatillisia pyrkimyksiä kääntämisen saralla – lopuista suurin osa (27,3 %) ei ollut asiasta varma.

Kyselyyn sisältyi joitain motivaatioon liittyviä kysymyksiä, joita en analysoinut yhtä syvällisesti kuin kolmea tärkeimmäksi nostamaani: kysyin vapaaehtoiskääntäjiltä, olivatko he harkinneet eroa tehtävästään ja jos, miksi; millaisille organisaatioille he olisivat valmiita toimimaan vapaaehtoiskääntäjinä ja millaisille ehdottomasti eivät ja; voisivatko he kuvitella toimivansa kääntäjänä yhtä aikaa sekä ammattimaisesti että vapaaehtoispuolelta. Hieman yli puolet vastaajista (54,5 %) oli jossain vaiheessa harkinnut eroavansa vapaaehtoistehtävästään – yleisimpänä syynä asian harkitsemiselle mainittiin ajanpuutteeseen liittyvät syyt.

Vastaajat nimesivät organisaatioiksi, joille voisivat kuvitella toimivansa vapaaehtoiskääntäjinä, enimmäkseen voittoa tavoittelemattomia organisaatioita, kuten vapaaehtoisorganisaatioita, hyväntekeväisyysjärjestöjä ja muita järjestöjä. Toisena teemana vastauksista oli mahdollista löytää yksinkertaisesti organisaatiot, joiden kanssa vastaajat olivat yhtä mieltä, joista he pitävät tai joita he pitävät tärkeinä. Lisäksi vastaajat mainitsivat yksittäisiä organisaatiotyyppisiä. Myös niiden organisaatioiden joukosta, joissa vastaajat eivät missään nimessä voisi kuvitella toimivansa vapaaehtoiskääntäjinä, on havaittavissa kaksi teemaa: yhtäältä organisaatiot, joiden tavoitteiden tai poliittisten näkemysten kanssa vastaajat eivät ole samaa mieltä, ja toisaalta suuret yritykset – mikä useissa vastauksissa oli yhteydessä yritysten kykyyn maksaa käännöksistä.

Hieman yli puolet vastaajista (54,5 %) ei voinut kuvitella toimivansa yhtä aikaa kääntäjänä sekä ammattimaisesti että vapaaehtoisena. Näistä puolet perusteli kantaansa sillä, etteivät he olleet ”oikeita” tai ammattimaisia kääntäjiä, ja monella muulla oli puolestaan muita ammatillisia intressejä. Niistä, jotka saattoivat kuvitella kysymyksessä esitetyn tilanteen, moni kertoi tilanteen olevan periaatteessa mahdollinen muttei todennäköinen tai asetti tilanteelle ehtoja esimerkiksi organisaation tyypin suhteen.

Kolme tärkeimmiksi nostamaani, motivaatiota koskevaa kysymystä käsittelivät Popmundon kääntäjien syitä hakeutua vapaaehtoiskääntäjiksi, heidän vapaaehtoistyöstä saamia hyötyjä ja motivaatiota tehdä työtä ilman rahallista korvausta. Käsittelen alla näitä kolmea kysymystä erikseen, minkä jälkeen vertaan teemoittelun avulla kuhunkin kysymykseen saamiani tuloksia keskenään.

Tunnistin vapaaehtoiskääntäjien motiiveista hakea vapaaehtoiskääntäjän tehtäviin neljä keskeistä teemaa: 1) halun auttaa peliä tai pelaajia, 2) tyytymättömyyden aiempaan

käännökseen, 3) työn itsensä näkemisen hauskana tai kiinnostavana tai kiinnostuksen kielten parissa työskentelyä kohtaan, ja 4) velvollisuudentunteen omaa yhteisöä kohtaan. Ensin mainittu oli näistä motiiveista yleisin, ja sen sisällä selvästi suurin osa koki halua auttaa nimenomaan peliä, usein ikään kuin antaakseen jotain takaisin pelille, josta vastaaja oli pitkään saanut nauttia. Toiseksi yleisin motiivi oli kiinnostus työtä kohtaan, mutta tämä motiivi yhdistettiin usein johonkin altruistiseen motiiviin.

Toinen keskeinen kysymys koski niitä hyötyjä, joita kääntäjät kokivat vapaaehtoistyöstä saavansa; kysymyksessä haettiin sekä vapaaehtoisten tärkeimmäksi kokemaa hyötyä että kaikki hyötyjä, joita he kokevat saavansa. Hyödyt eivät luonnollisesti korreloi suoraan motiiveihin, mutta oletin vastausten silti osaltaan valaisevan sitä, mitkä hyödyt motivoivat Popmundon vapaaehtoiskääntäjiä. Moni vastaajista mainitsi pelin kääntäjille tarjoaman, pelinsisäisiä hyötyjä sisältävän lahjapaketin, mutta kaikki sen maininneet vähättelivät sen merkitystä motivaatioonsa jollain tavoin.

Tärkeimmän vapaaehtoistyöstä saadun hyödyn osalta vastauksista oli erotettavissa kolme selkeää teemaa: 1) sellaisten taitojen kehittäminen tai kokemuksen hankkiminen, jota voi hyödyntää pelin ulkopuolella, 2) kääntäjän oman kieliyhteisön auttaminen, ja 3) työn itsensä tuottama nautinto; näistä useimmin mainittiin ensimmäisenä ja viimeisimpänä mainitut hyödyt. Kaikkien vastaajien mainitsemien hyötyjen osalta löytämäni teemat olivat muutoin samat, mutta auttamiskategoriassa kieliyhteisö ei korostunut, vaan hyötynä nähtiin toisten auttaminen yleisesti, ja pelinsisäiset hyödyt nousivat neljänneksi kategoriaksi.

Kolmas keskeisistä kysymyksistä käsitteli vapaaehtoiskääntäjien motivaatiota työskennellä ilman rahallista korvausta, jonka konseptualisoin – suhteessa motivaatioon hakeutua vapaaehtoiseksi – viestivän osaltaan myös motivaatiosta jatkaa vapaaehtoistehtävässä. Vastauksista oli havaittavissa kolme laajempaa teemaa: 1) työstä nauttiminen, 2) pelin käyttäjien auttaminen, ja 3) halu auttaa peliä. Kolmen pääteeman ohella vastauksissa viitattiin tosin runsaasti myös taitojen oppimiseen tai käyttämiseen tai kokemuksen hankkimiseen sekä muuhun henkilökohtaiseen nautintoon (kuin itse työstä saatuun). Useimmin näistä esiintyi työn itsensä tuottama nautinto.

Vertailin yllä esitettyihin kolmeen keskeiseen kysymykseen saamiani vastauksia myös toisiinsa tutkiakseni erityisesti sitä, eroavatko vapaaehtoiskääntäjien motiivit hakeutua toimeensa heidän motiiveistaan jatkaa siinä, sekä sitä, korreloivatko heidän työstä saamansa hyödyt siihen, mikä heitä varsinaisesti motivoi. Vertailun lähtökohtana toimii alla oleva Taulukko 1.



Motiivityyppi	Motivaatiotekijä	Alkuperäinen motivaatio (Kysymys 1)	Koetut hyödyt (Kysymys 2) <sup>13</sup>	Motivaatio työskennellä ilman rahallista korvausta (Kysymys 3)
<b>Altruistinen motivaatio</b>	Pelin auttaminen	9	2/0	7
	Käyttäjien/yhteisön auttaminen	8	6/4	5
<b>Altruistinen motivaatio yhteensä</b>		17	8/4	12
<b>Utilitaristinen motivaatio</b>	Työstä nauttiminen	8	8/6	8
	Taitojen kehittäminen / kokemuksen hankkiminen	2	9/7	6
	Pelinsisäiset hyödyt	-	9/3	-
	Tyytymättömyys aiempaan käännökseen	5	-	-
	Vaikutusvalta/status	2	1/1	3
	Muu utilitaristinen motivaatio	-	-	5
<b>Utilitaristinen motivaatio yhteensä</b>		17	27/17	22
<b>Yhteensä</b>		34	35/21	34

Aiemmin kunkin kysymyksen yhteydessä mainitut teemat on taulukkoa varten standardisoitu vertailun mahdollistamiseksi. Osa vastaajista kommentoi kolmen pääkysymyksen samankaltaisuutta vastauksissaan, mutta vastauksista eri kysymyksiin löytyi tästä huolimatta selkeitä eroja.

Sekä pelin että sen käyttäjien auttaminen osoittautui selkeästi tärkeäksi motiiviksi vastaajille kautta linjan; kysymyksen 2 matalampi osuus voi selittyä sillä, ettei altruistisia motiiveja kategorisoida hyödyiksi. Myös työstä itsestään nauttiminen sekä vaikutusvalta tai status olivat selvästi pysyväluntoisia motiiveja – joskin jälkimmäinen ei itsessään ollut erityisen vahva motiivi. Eroja kysymysten välille tuottivatkin lähinnä muut utilitaristiset motiivit: taitojen kehittäminen tai kokemuksen hankkiminen ei ollut vahva motiivi hakeutua vapaaehtoistoimeen, mutta se koettiin yleisesti tärkeäksi hyödyksi ja motiiviksi jatkaa tehtävässä. Pelinsisäiset hyödyt olivat selvästi lähinnä bonus vastaajille, ei niinkään keskeinen

<sup>13</sup> Tämän kolumnin luvut esittävät järjestyksessä mainintojen kokonaismäärää sekä mainintoja tärkeimpänä hyötynä.

motiivi. Tyytymättömyys aiempaan käännökseen puolestaan oli loogisestikin motiivi ainoastaan tehtävään hakeutumiselle.

Taulukossa motiivit on jaoteltu altruistisiin ja utilitaristisiin motiiveihin. Popmundon vapaaehtoisikäntäjien motivaatio hakeutua vapaaehtoiseksi vaikuttaa sisältävän yhtä paljon altruistisia ja utilitaristisia elementtejä, mutta motivaatiossa työskennellä ilman rahallista korvausta utilitaristinen motivaatio on selvästi hallitseva. Hyödyissä utilitaristiset motiivit ovat vielä dominoivammassa asemassa – altruistisia motiiveja ei välttämättä mielletä yhtä lailla hyödyiksi kuin utilitaristisia.

## **Tulosten tulkintaa ja johtopäätökset**

Popmundon vapaaehtoisikäntäjien motivaatio osoittautui identifioimieni teemojen perusteella hyvin moninaiseksi mutta sisällöllisesti varsin odotetun kaltaiseksi – tulosten vertaaminen aiempaan tutkimukseen osoittaa yhtäläisyyksien ohella kuitenkin myös joitain mielenkiintoisia eroja. McDonough Dolmaya (2012) vertasi oman tutkimuksensa tuloksia kahteen avoimen lähdekoodin projekteja (Free and Open Source Software, FOSS) käsittelevään tutkimukseen (Lakhani & Wolf 2005 ja Ghosh 2005), ja havaitsi, että jälkimmäisissä ulko- ja sisäsyntyinen motivaatio olivat kumpikin vahvasti edustettuina, kun taas McDonough Dolmayan omassa tutkimuksessa sisäsyntyinen motivaatio oli selvästi yleisempi. Kategoriat eivät vastaa täysin altruistista ja utilitaristista motivaatiota, mutta mahdollistavat silti vertailun: Popmundo on FOSS-projektien tavoin tuoteorientoitunut (*product-driven*) projekti toisin kuin McDonough Dolmayan tutkimuksen kohteena ollut, tavoiteorientoitunut (*cause-driven*) Wikipedia, mikä McDonough Dolmayan mukaan saattoi vaikuttaa motiivien luonteessa näkyvään eroon. Tulokseni vahvistavat tätä näkemystä.

Popmundon kaupallinen luonne ei tulosten perusteella tunnu vaikuttavan vastaajieni motivaatioon negatiivisesti. Tämä tukee Désilets & van der Meerin hypoteesiä, jonka mukaan organisaation tyyppiä tärkeämpää joukkoistamisprojektien onnistumiselle on vapaaehtoisten tunneside projektiin – mikä Popmundon tapauksessa näyttäytyy haluna antaa jotain takaisin pelille. Samoin vastaajieni vastauksissa siihen, millaisille organisaatioille he voisivat toimia vapaaehtoisikäntäjinä ja millaisille eivät, tärkeämpää vaikutti olevan organisaation koko kuin sen tyyppi sekä erityisesti se, että vastaajat olivat samaa mieltä organisaation tavoitteiden ja arvojen kanssa.

Kyselyn tarjoamat taustatiedot selittävät osaltaan kääntämiseen liittyvien ammatillisten pyrkimysten puuttumista motiivien joukosta – vastaajien joukossa kääntäjänkoulutusta saaneet, ammattimaiset kääntäjät ja käännöstieteestä enemmän tietävät olivat hyvin harvassa. Tästä huolimatta vapaaehtoistyö tarjosi vastaajille myös pelin ulkopuolisessa maailmassa tarvittavia taitoja ja kokemusta, mitä vastaajat myös arvostivat keskeisenä hyötynä ja motivaationa jatkaa vapaaehtoisroolissaan.

Suhteessa Olohanin (2014), McDonough Dolmayan (2012) ja O'Brien & Schälerin (2010) tutkimuksiin tulokseni osoittautuivat pääpiirteittäin samanlaisiksi. Se, että vapaaehtoiset saattoivat allekirjoittaa organisaation tavoitteet – kyselyssäni tämä vastaa kohtuullisesti pelin auttamisen kategorialla – sekä joko työstä nauttiminen tai ”älylliset virikkeet” olivat kaikissa mainituissa tutkimuksissa keskeisiä motivaatiotekijöitä – samoin kuin omissa tuloksissanikin. Taitojen tai kokemuksen hankkiminen oli myös keskeinen motiivi McDonough Dolmayan ja O'Brien & Schälerin tutkimuksissa, muttei Olohanilla – tuloksissani tämä ei ollut aivan keskeistä motivaatiossa hakeutua vapaaehtoiseksi mutta kylläkin tehtävissä jatkamiselle. Käyttäjien tai yhteisön auttaminen oli neljäs keskeinen motivaatiotekijä Popmundon vapaaehtoiskääntäjille, mutta tämä ei ollut vaihtoehtona O'Brien & Schälerin tutkimuksessa. McDonough Dolmayalla lähin vastine – verkoston jäsenenä oleminen – ei ollut keskeinen motiivi, mutta Olohanin tutkimuksessa osallisuus yhteisössä oli toistuva motivaatiotekijä.

Edellisessä osiossa mainittujen altruististen ja utilitarististen motiivien väliseen jakaumaan katson sisältyvän joitain epävarmuustekijöitä. Luvut perustuvat vastauksissa esiintyviin mainintoihin yksittäisistä teemoista, ja utilitaristisen motivaation kategoriaan sisältyi yksinkertaisesti useampia erillisiä teemoja kuin altruistisen, jossa teemoja oli käytännössä vain kaksi. En myöskään kysynyt vastaajilta, kuinka paljon kukin motivaatiotekijä heitä motivoi, mikä tarkoittaa sitä, ettei utilitarististen ja altruististen motiivien jakauma välttämättä edusta niiden suhteellista tärkeyttä vapaaehtoiskääntäjille.

Kyselyyni vastasi verrattain suuri osuus Popmundon vapaaehtoiskääntäjistä, mutta sen edustavuuteen on silti liitettävä joitain varauksia. Tapaustutkimuksena tulokset eivät ole myöskään yleistettävissä laajemmin esimerkiksi pelilokalisaaion parissa toimiviin vapaaehtoiskääntäjiin, mutta ne tarjoavat siitä huolimatta lähtökohdan kyseisen kaltaisissa ympäristöissä vapaaehtoiskääntämistä harjoittavien motivaatioon.

Tutkielmaa tehdessäni vastaan tuli joitain sellaisia suuntia, joihin vapaaehtoiskääntäjien motivaation tutkimusta olisi mielekästä laajentaa. Motivaatiotutkimus on pitkälti keskittynyt

motivoivien tekijöiden kartoittamiseen, mutta yhtä lailla mielenkiintoista olisi selvittää tekijöitä, jotka vähentävät vapaaehtoisikäntäjien tai muiden -toimijoiden motivaatiota ja saavat heidät lopettamaan vapaaehtoistoimintansa. Lisäksi tutkimuksessa voitaisiin keskittyä motivaatiotekijöiden ja niiden kategorisoinnin ohella enemmän myös siihen, kuinka tärkeänä kutakin motivaatiotekijää pidetään.